



# HERE TO STAY



A Collection of  
Jewish  
Short Stories

*By*

**S. B. KOMAIKO**

Close to one hundred gripping real life stories which portray Jewish immigrant life in America.

Delightful reminiscences for the old and a fascinating revelation for the younger generations.

Packed with Jewish humor, satire and human interest.

**BLOCH PUBLISHING COMPANY**

## HERE TO STAY

There is more than humor in these stories. They offer an authentic picture of former Jewish immigrant life that is passing so rapidly. Though there will always be Jews in this country who observe the festivals and other customs of their faith, there was a certain naivete and down-to-earthness in the way the transplanted European Jew lived with which no activity of the later generations can compare. He brought with him Old World customs, European modes of expression, unique family relationships; and he spent as much effort in adapting himself to his new environment as in earning his daily bread. What the author has brought to our notice, in these short tales written over a considerable period of years and

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*A COLLECTION OF  
JEWISH SHORT STORIES*

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S. B. KOMAIKO



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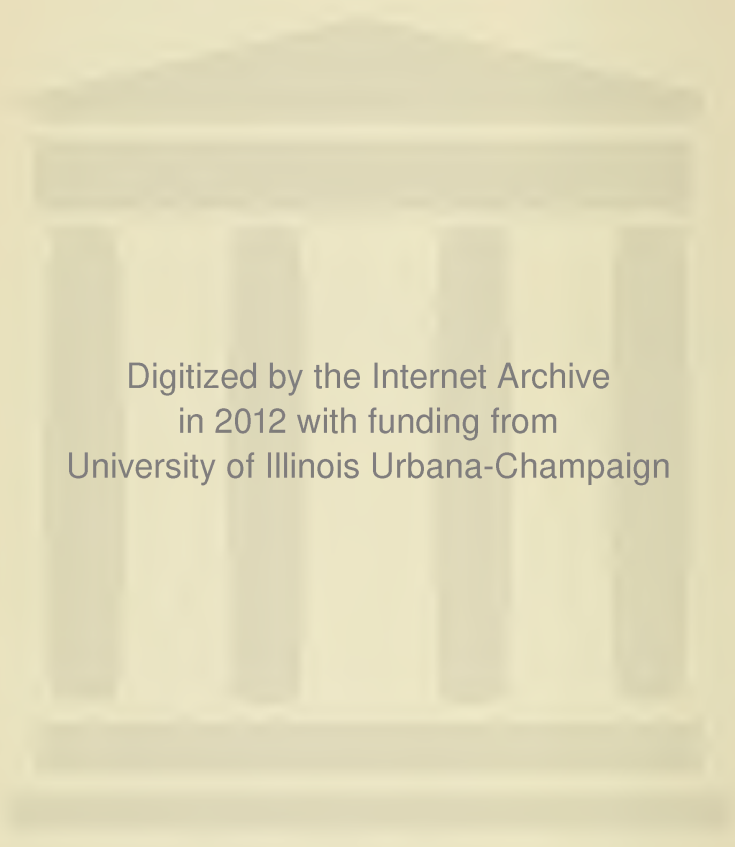
The Gift of Elaine and  
Allen Avner in Memory of  
their Parents Herman and  
Pearl Seltzer Sweital and  
Sim and Laura Moore Avner

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S. B. Kamato



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HERE TO STAY



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*A Collection  
of  
Jewish Short Stories*

By S. B. KOMAIKO

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BLOCH PUBLISHING COMPANY

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S. B. KOMAIKO

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To my son

WILLIAM KADISON KOMAIKO

who gave his life in World War II

Library Friend Designated Gift



## FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THESE short stories appeared over a long period in many Anglo-Jewish weeklies and in the "Chicago Sentinel." I have been urged by a number of friends to have them published in book form. The greatest encouragement came from my friend, Rabbi Solomon B. Freehof, who wrote to me:

"In whatever language you write, you manage to give the feeling of Jewish immigrant life in America. Some day books such as yours will be of value to the historian. Think how priceless it would be if we had such intimate sketches of the life of the Jews in Spain or in Babylon."

This book appears at a great moment in Jewish history, at a time when we are thrilled by the establishment of the State of Israel. It is clear to everyone that the very great majority of American Jews will remain to live as American citizens in this generation and in generations to come. These stories are glimpses into the minds and lives of those who are "Here To Stay."

I am very grateful to Rabbi Abraham Burstein for his splendid cooperation in arranging the order of the stories, to Miss Anna Fisch of the Bloch Publishing Co., for her valuable suggestions, and last but not least, to my daughter, Pearl (Mrs. Arnold Belchetz), for reading the proofs.

S. B. KOMAIKO



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EVERY DAY



## BAR MITZVAH AMERICANA

LEO, the thirteen year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Simon, sits on the altar in front of the Aron Kodesh, the ark of the Law. On his right is his father; on the left sits Reuben Bank, president of the congregation.

The rabbi is reading the service.

This is the great day in Leo's young life. Today he celebrates his Bar Mitzvah. For weeks, for months he has labored with great zeal and devotion to perfect his speech and his part in the ceremony. And now the day of all days has arrived.

Shortly he will be called upon to stand before the congregation and deliver his address. He notes the restlessness of his father and mother; he sees the beaming faces of his old grandparents. He anticipates the moment when, having finished the declaration of faith, Rabbi Feingold will give him the benediction. Then at last, he will become a full fledged member of the House of Israel.

When Leo looks out at the congregation and sees how few people there are in the synagogue there is one thing he does not understand. He helped his mother address the invitations. The announcements stated very clearly that there would be services in the synagogue on Saturday and a reception the following evening, Sunday night. Four hundred and fifty invitations have been mailed out.

Where are all the people?

With childish eagerness he counts the occupied seats

. . . eighteen in all. And that includes his parents and two others who fill his heart with joy. But at any rate the presence of grandpa and grandma helps to reassure him. Grandpa assisted him considerably with the Hebrew lines in his speech. Grandma listened to his preparations and kissed his forehead, for she too had a knowledge of Hebrew. Her father had been a rabbi in Yanova, Poland. As a matter of fact, she had timidly chided Leo's teacher because he had not put more Hebrew expressions in the speech. She would say, "English, English all the time . . . aber zu Bar Mitzvah a little more Hebrew is better."

Leo concluded his speech. It had been delivered with emotion and understanding.

The thing which inspired him most while he talked was the rapt attention his words received from his grandparents. He loved them very much. He had been a mere baby when they came from Yanova; it was they who pushed his baby carriage, for the Simons had had no time and in those days they could not afford to hire a maid. All these years his grandparents had been with him and watched over him. Father and mother were always busy . . . always.

His teacher had instructed him that after the rabbi's benediction he was to step down off the altar and kiss his parents. But in his great excitement Leo ran first to his grandparents. When he kissed them he tasted the salt of the tears on their cheeks, but he did not mind this. "Oh Leo'ly," grandma said, "may God give you such *mazel* as good as you said your Hebrew." Grandpa said, "Believe me, a thousand rabbis in America . . . you could teach them Hebrew."

His mother left the few guests who were offering congratulations and rushed over to him. She kissed him lovingly. "Leo darling, I'm proud of you. Your speech



was great. Everybody says so. Now, darling, run along home with grandma and grandpa. Papa has to go to the store, and I have a thousand things to do for your reception tomorrow night. I must run down town after lunch."

\* \* \*

The presents had started to arrive on Saturday morning at the Simon home. They were piling up at the very moment when Leo at the synagogue was assuming the obligations of a good Jew and a good American. They came from friends, from relatives, and from those who felt it good business to favor the son of a customer. So when Leo and his grandparents arrived home they found pyramids of boxes. Leo recognized many of the names of the people who had sent gifts. They were names he had seen on the envelopes of the invitation cards. Again he did not understand why the people who had apparently thought well enough of him to send gifts had not thought it necessary to appear at the synagogue to hear him promise to be a good Jew.

Sunday arrived. That proved to be the day of unexpected experiences for Leo. A goodly number dropped in during the afternoon. They congratulated Leo and his parents and departed. But some stayed on and gathered in the room that had been set up as a bar for the occasion. Some took to tables and played cards.

It was in the evening that the crowds really arrived, and that meant more presents. Leo was in a turmoil trying to keep track of the ties, fountain pens, and shirts that poured in.

Soon the bar became the center of attraction. Leo was amazed to see how continuously the guests poured the drinks down their throats, even the women.

In the midst of the noise and confusion he got an ur-

gent desire to see his grandparents, who were by this time quietly sitting in their room. They were happy to see him and for Leo their very presence was reassuring. But then he heard his father call and he rushed back into the crowded living room.

"Come on, Leo," his father commanded. "Give your Bar Mitzvah speech for our good friends."

"But Pa," the Bar Mitzvah pleaded, "my speech is for a synagogue, for the house of God."

"Come on, come on," Mr. Simon insisted; "I spent enough on your lessons."

"May the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob bless our congregation," the Bar Mitzvah began.

"I'll have another cocktail, please," came a female voice from the bar.

"Oh, Father in Heaven, I pray unto thee for my parents and grandparents," pleaded the Bar Mitzvah.

"Hey, Max, how about some more Scotch?" demanded one of the guests.

\* \* \*

Few noticed that Leo had left the room. When his mother found him he was lying on his bed, his face turned away from the presents and his eyes filled with tears. He was sobbing.

Mrs. Simon was frightened. "Leo," she said, "what's the matter, darling? Don't you feel good?"

"I'm all right, mother . . . but . . . were those people ever Bar Mitzvah?"

### WILL HE MAKE IT IN TIME?

PHILLIP GROSS gets up from his supper table and says to his wife, "I enjoyed the veal cutlets immensely." Then he goes to the garden.

Mr. Gross is an old settler in this rich suburb. With his first wife, who was Jewish, he lived here almost thirty years. She never bore him any children. His present wife is not of the Jewish faith.

Quite often he goes to his garden all alone.

His wife, Elizabeth, gives him this freedom, for he needs rest. Every morning he hurries to the city with other commuters of the white collar class. They greet each other in a superficial manner, and bury their noses in newspapers.

Evenings Mr. Gross comes home nervous, upset, disturbed. He is a member of the Stock Exchange. It seems the richer he gets the more responsibilities he assumes, and the more nervous he becomes.

This evening he also has a heavy heart.

Philip Gross is not of the sentimental type. Most of the time his memories carry him to incidents dealing with business; through his mind go financial conflicts, losses, gains. But this evening something different holds him . . . it is the day when his beloved mother went to her everlasting sleep.

In the silence of the garden he hears a voice of days long gone by. It is the voice of his mother calling to his father:

"Moshe Haim! Stop bothering to clean the shelves! It is late already. Some people are going to shul already; it is time for us to join them. Thank God that we have a chance once in a while to forget our grocery store with all its troubles and *tsores* . . . !"

Many years have gone by and yet he can see his father before his very eyes. He had been fit for hardly anything in the work-a-day world, except to help mother in the grocery store. Yet on the Sabbath or on a holiday when he was dressed in his best he looked like a saint of old.



Philip sees his mother taking care of the many Jewish women customers in her grocery. They admired and loved her for her wit and sympathetic soul. In the synagogue she was outstanding. They all greeted her when they came in and out of shul.

He remembers, too, that this good mother once upon a time gave him a real good licking . . . he remembers that well. . . .

The reason for the punishment was that his father naively reported to her, "Faifke (now Philip) sneaks out of the synagogue and plays dice with other boys."

As a matter of fact he was the ring-leader. He influenced the others to desert their fathers in shul and come out and play with him. It reached the point where some of the mothers, customers in the grocery store, complained that Faifke took from their children their last pennies.

Thoughts of the dice games of his childhood lead him to later memories—memories of young manhood and speculation on the stock market, when he became a familiar figure in the financial district.

His marriage to the daughter of an intelligent Jewish family had given him position in well-to-do Jewish circles. It must be said that Gross knew his limitations in religious and cultural fields. He would never take part when spiritual subjects were discussed. Nevertheless, he became president of a congregation.

Success in business brings recognition. As a matter of fact he later became president of a charitable institution.

Quite often he would say to himself, "Aren't people funny? There are a bunch of directors on the board of the institution in which I am interested who contribute more

money than I do, although they are not as rich as I am, yet I am the president. Isn't that funny?"



A luxurious residence across the road from Gross's garden, at which he glances when he raises his eyes, brings a pain to his heart. James McClain, a prominent and rich churchman, occupies that home. Mr. McClain is also a member of the Stock Exchange and has given Gross the cold shoulder on many occasions.

Philip Gross has one ambition in his life, and that is: some day to become president of the Stock Exchange. He has concluded that his activities in Jewish life, his leadership in spiritual and charitable institutions of his people, would never find much room in the English papers. As president of the Stock Exchange his picture would be published in the financial pages of all the papers.

But the opposition of men like his neighbor, McClain, and others of that type prevented Mr. Gross from realizing his dreams.

While Mr. Gross was busy carrying on his useless campaign to become president of the Stock Exchange he neglected his duties to the Jewish institutions. Criticism was raised by members of the boards that his contributions could be larger, and he lost ground with his people. Others occupied his place. This was painful to him.

Unconsciously, he began to take revenge. One way was to tell his secretary, "If a Jew with a beard comes in tell him I am not in—I've given them plenty of my money!"

As a matter of fact he began to feel that perhaps the visits of these rabbis or schnorrers were the cause of him not becoming president of the Stock Exchange.

Two flower pots in a corner of the garden remind him

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of his first wife . . . She took great care of the two pots . . . It is three years since her passing.

His present wife, non-Jewish, is of middle age. She comes from an outstanding American family. When he met her she was a widow.

It was his hope that through her influence and her contacts he would become the head of the Exchange.

During the two years since, he had run for president of the Stock Exchange on two occasions and been defeated both times.

Socially, Elizabeth did a lot of entertaining. Many members of her family would call; also friends with whom she was active in her church. Her Philip was proud of these prominent guests, but somehow or other, reciprocal invitations came back infrequently.

Elizabeth has her own automobile; she makes many visits to her friends. Each time she steps in the car she kisses her Jewish husband and says, "Good by, Daddy," and he tenderly returns, "Be careful, darling." . . .

. . .

The sun sets in the West.

Philip Gross feels something drawing him. Night will soon fall. He is reminded that soon in the synagogue where he used to be president people will gather for the evening prayer.

It seems that voices are resounding from the two flower pots . . .

For a moment he feels uneasy at being reminded of days gone by, yet there is something pleasant about the thought.

When Elizabeth comes out of the house and calls, "Daddy, Daddy, where are you?" there is no answer, for



at that moment an automobile is rushing through Washington Road with great speed. Its driver is Philip Gross. He keeps on saying, "Jesus Christ! Will I be on time for yahrzeit!"

### A WARM RECEPTION

MY FRIEND and I were brought up together in the same little town in Europe. Every Friday, before the approach of the Sabbath, our fathers used to take us to a Russian Turkish bath. In those days the Turkish bath was the "community bathtub."

But of course, before the high holidays, the Yamim Tovim, the pilgrimage to the bath house was more important than ever. For no good Jew could elevate his Yom Tov soul to a Yom Tov spirit unless his body had been Russian-Turkishized.

And in all these years during which my friend enjoyed the home comforts of "the American way" he still visited a Turkish bath in his old neighborhood.

With him it was a tradition.

But a day before Succoth, when I suggested that we might both take a Turkish bath, he became enraged and said, "What? Go with you to have a Turkish bath? Nothing doing! I have sweated enough—no more!"

I was astonished to find he had suddenly grown cold to this warmest, this most delightful, earthly paradise.

He hemmed and hawed a while before I succeeded in working out of him the reason for his new attitude. And here is the whole story in his own words:

One day my wife suggested that I take a trip to her relations in Boston. Business here is not so *ai ai*. In plain words, it's on the bum. It might be, she suggested, that

## HERE TO STAY

her family, most of whom are wealthy, would find a business for me or a job.

I come to her uncle—a rich lawyer. He is highly pleased to see me. He tells me that at the moment he is very busy; but he insists that I return at two o'clock in the afternoon; then it will be a pleasure for him to entertain me.

I arrive exactly at the minute—two P. M. My wife's uncle, the lawyer, explains to me that he has big cases pending in court which have made him nervous; and therefore he goes every afternoon at two o'clock for an electric massage, a sweat bath, and an alcohol rub-down. And on this day he takes me with him so that I, too, may get the kinks worked out of my skin.

And, say what you will, the sweat and the massage gave me great delight.

I expected my uncle to invite me to have supper with him—the alcohol rub had aroused my appetite—but instead he pointed out where to catch the car which would take me to my hotel; and at the parting moment he begged me to call on him again before I left the city.

In the evening I felt quite lonely, so I telephoned one of my wife's cousins. He told me he was sorry his family was not at home. As for myself, he was leaving for downtown, where he suggested I should meet him and he would be pleased to have a visit with me.

No sooner did he greet me with his snappy "How do you do?" then he made the suggestion that, in view of the fact that he was all alone and would like to befriend and entertain me, I go with him and enjoy a body-soothing sweat bath.

This time it was not a mere matter of electricity and alcohol. Understand me, it was a sweat bath with all the heat and fire—genuinely Jewish!

In the morning I hadn't strength enough to get up.

I looked over the list of my wife's relatives and found another uncle, a wholesale grocery man.

I looked him up and he complained that since the depression he had become subject to nervousness. One of his friends had advised him to take a sweat bath and an alcohol rub twice a week. And he declared I had come just in time. In an instant he would be going for his bath, and I must accompany him. On the way he would find time to inquire about the family.

To tell him that my bones and body had already been massaged and sweated a day previous, and that it had all happened thanks to my relatives, would be giving away the fact that I had called on the other relatives before looking him up—plainly a slight, almost an insult. So I held my tongue.

The masseur who rubbed me down this time very nearly transported me to the realm of departed spirits.

A few more touches and my soul would have left my body.

My uncle, the grocery man, noticed that my stride had slowed down, my steps were rather hesitant; and so he consoled me by telling of other fellows he knew whom a sweat bath weakened. And he suggested that a good nap would pep me up once more.

The last of my wife's relatives I found to be a Hungarian Jew—he had married my wife's aunt. With great show of authority he criticized the Litvaks. He pointed out that the Litvaks don't have time to eat or drink, but keep themselves constantly busy with money-making. With pride he told me how he was, and how his business could not get along without him a minute—still, he finds time twice a week to go to the "club," in the gymnasium



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of which he takes a sweat bath, a massage, and an alcohol rub.

With the friendship of a relative who has a genuine feeling for family ties, he invited me to go with him to enjoy a treat to melt your very soul with delight.

Well, what was there to do? I wasn't going to give a newly-found relative, and especially a Hungarian, a chance to say that we Litvaks never go to the baths. So I went with him.

How does the saying go? Even a Litvak is not made of steel and iron. I had been rubbed so much that finally I gave way and fainted while the muscular Swede was still working on me. He himself almost died of fright; and when my relative helped me out of the bath-house he begged me to pardon him, as he didn't know that I was unaccustomed to taking a sweat bath.

I returned home to my wife with very warm greetings from her hospitable relatives.

## HORSE SENSE

It is late in the morning.

A thin blanket of snow covers the grounds of the pretentious homes in the fashionable suburb of Etna.

Only the evergreen trees are a reminder that a couple of months ago gay colored flowers dotted the countryside, contrasting with the drab colors of the suburban houses.

Now and then the calm is disturbed by a servant bringing out the family wash to hang on the line in the backyard. The crisp clothes swaying in the frosty late autumn wind add another touch of whiteness to the snowy scene. In front of the luxurious homes, stiff, uniformed chauff-

feurs appear at the open doors of automobiles, waiting for the lady of the house to enter.

Old David Silk, who two months ago moved from the familiar Jewish neighborhood into the home of his married daughter, sits in a comfortable chair in his bedroom and looks out into the distance.

\* \* \*

Before leaving his old surroundings, Silk had hesitated for quite a while. He had spent his entire life, since coming from Poland as a young man, in the old Jewish section. There he had reared his children, who were now scattered to the four corners of the country. That is, all except the one daughter who now lived in the fashionable suburb of Etna.

His daughter and son-in-law realized that it would take some time for their father to adjust himself to his new environment. But they understood that there was no other way open, since he had been left alone after the death of his beloved wife.

So hesitant was their father to move to the suburb that he even hinted that perhaps they should place him in the Home for the Aged. Of course, his children would not consent to this, since it would be a reflection upon their reputation.

Since they could not find any suitable place where they could pay for their father's maintenance, they brought him to his daughter's home in Etna.

For the first couple of weeks, his daughter inquired about his health and always asked if he needed anything. As time went on, they paid little attention to him.

\* \* \*

He spends most of his time in his room, that is prettily furnished and contains, in addition to the usual bed-

room ensemble, a gas burner on which he cooks his own meals, in the kosher way. When he gets tired of studying some of the Hebrew books he brought with him, he gazes with tired and sorrowful eyes out of the window.

It has already been a number of weeks since he prayed in a synagogue, for there is none in the neighborhood.

When he puts on his *tallis* and *tefillin* in the morning, he feels that he is not alone. The holy books resting in the shelves especially built for them, become as living beings to him.

He is grateful to God that before he goes to bed in the early evening he is able to say the prayer in which he entrusts his soul to God. . . . He would also be thankful if his children's friends did not make so much noise and disturb his sleep when playing pinochle.

• • •

For a while David Silk paced across his room, glanced over his beloved books and sat again at the window in his comfortable chair.

At this moment a horse and wagon passed through the alley and he at once recognized the rag peddler as his old friend, Samuel Bimbom, who had climbed the ladder of success only so high as to peddle junk.

To David Silk the appearance of his old friend was almost as important as the coming of the Messiah.

Since knocking on the window or using his voice would not fit into the present surroundings, he rushed outside breathlessly to attract the attention of his old synagogue crony.

Samuel Bimbom was not surprised at all to find his old friend in this suburb. Everybody in the Smargonner Shul knew that David Silk had moved to his children



in some out-of-the-way place. But exactly where they did not know.

"Do you come so far out to peddle?" Silk inquired of his friend.

"When it comes to *parnassah*," Bimbom replied, "my *shkape* (horse) will take me anywhere."

"How about coming into the house and having a glass of tea with me?" Silk invited him. "Nobody is home and we will have a good *shmues* about old times."

"My *shkape* looks well behaved. But sometimes she walks off."

"Bring your horse and wagon to the front," said Silk, "and tie him to one of the trees."

Sam Bimbom hesitated for quite a while before he said, "After all, it's a Jewish home. What's the difference?"

Both were drinking hot tea, squeezing lemons, and reminiscing of days gone by when Silk's daughter came in and screamed hysterically.

"In God's name, who put that horse and wagon in front of the door? For God's sake, what will the neighbors say? Pa, lately you have been doing things which make it rather hard on us. How can you permit such a thing?"

The old man stood up and pointing his finger outside, he sarcastically answered, "That animal has more horse sense than you and all your neighbors put together!"

### "WHERE, OH, WHERE"

His name a week ago was Tobias Itzhok. Today he is Thomas Hitchcock. The change to the Anglo-Saxon name was accomplished with some difficulty.

The judge before whom Itzhok appeared had some scruples about whether the petitioner who stood before him had a physiognomy which went well with "Hitchcock." But Itzhok had his way.

In a happy mood, Mr. Hitchcock, as we must call him now, tries all the doors and windows of his residence to make sure they are locked. The family waits for him out in the car. They are setting out on a two-week trip.

He approaches the car garbed in a brand new pair of knickers, an article of clothing he never wore while he was still Itzhok. His wife thinks he looks cute; to his children he is merely funny.

Rose and Girty, two plump young ladies of fourteen and sixteen years, respectively, and their brother, Jack, aged twelve, sit in the back seat. The Missus sits in front and she arranges the seat so that there will be plenty of room for the husband who is now a real Amerikaner. Thanks to him she is no longer a *Yente* with a green name smacking of Shnipishok. The truth of the matter is that she encouraged him to acquire a real Amerikaner name.

"This night school business," she used to say, "and running around all the time, like Mrs. Pukelewich, with meetings, lectures and shmektors, doesn't make an Amerikaner. When your husband makes a dollar, and you pay rent on time and wear classy clothes . . . that's the thing! Aber, you must have a nice name."

Only Rose, who through her friendship with other girls in the neighborhood had come to attend the Sabbath school of the local synagogue and there acquired a better understanding of Jewish life and Jewish obligations, resented the attitude of her parents.

"Levys and Cohens," Rose would say, "fought in all wars and helped our country in other struggles."



To this the Mother would wave her hand and say, "Sha, sha!" The father would add, "Those Levys and Cohens did not have to sell merchandise in a trade like mine, where the name Itzhok is *terefah*."

Rose often felt like telling her father that changing his name would not remake his appearance. But here again the Sabbath school influence affected her, for her young heart was moved by the commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother."

"I made up my mind," says Mr. Hitchcock, as the car approaches the outskirts of the city, "that tonight when we get to Bloomsville we'll stop at that nice hotel there."

"Why push ourselves where we are not wanted?" asks Rose.

"Sha, sha!" the mother exclaims.

"And why did I change my name?" says the father. "For my money I can get what I want!"

There is a pause during which no one speaks. Mrs. Hitchcock begins to think. She will be the envy of her Jewish friends when she tells them how her family stopped in a hotel where they were the only Jews, and how they were respected by real Amerikaners. But then she looks back at her son, Jack.

Mr. Hitchcock reads the disappointment in his wife's face. He is a blonde, of the Southern Russian type; his wife has red hair; the two girls are blondes. But, unfortunately for them, Jack's features are strongly semitic . . . a typical Yid.

As if instinctively, Jack feels somewhat out of place. His dark features wrinkle and a troubled look comes into his black eyes which touches his mother's heart.

But Mr. Hitchcock grasps the situation. "There is nothing to worry about. It will be night by the time we get to the hotel. I will go in to make the reservation; you

will stay in the car. Then we go up to our rooms and that's all there is to it."

"Yes . . . sneak in like thieves," says Rose.

"Sha, sha, sha!" the mother hushes her.

"Is that so?" says Mr. Hitchcock, in anger, "I'm not stealing anything. I'm paying with my money."

When the desk clerk at the hotel declares, "I hope you enjoy your stay here, Mr. Hitchcock," the former Mr. Itzhok has but one wish, that all his friends could be present to hear the manner in which he has been addressed.

After the family retires, Mr. Hitchcock goes down to the lobby. The truth is he finds it rather lonesome. It is so different from those hotels where Jewish laughter is heard at all hours and "Vas machstu" rings out on every side. Here everyone's face is buried in a newspaper or a magazine. The people seem to be angry with each other; no one speaks to his neighbor.

At the moment one gentleman looks up. Lo and behold, Mr. Hitchcock recognizes him. It is Frank Hart, whom he meets at the Temple every Yom Kippur. Before he has time to greet him Hart disappears.

"Aha," says Hitchcock to himself. "He's ashamed to meet a fellow Jew. When he sees me in Temple on Yom Kippur he keeps me busy the whole day with his business affairs and his smart investments."

Mr. Hitchcock looks around another few minutes and then goes out on the verandah to inhale the clean air of the summer night.

"Well, well! what is Itzhok the salesman doing here?" he hears someone ask. Then he notices two men sitting at the end of the verandah. The voice is the voice of Jacob, but before Mr. Hitchcock is able to check on the identity of the men they too are lost.

Just over the road from the hotel there is a one-story frame building housing a store where the hotel guests go to play the slot machines and the other devices installed to help vacationers while away their time and their money.

Among the others playing the machines Mr. Hitchcock notices a gentleman he knows well . . . Oscar Ginsley (formerly Ginsburg).

"Are you stopping at this hotel?" Ginsley inquires suspiciously.

"I am here with my family," answers Hitchcock.

"Why . . . they don't allow Jews at this hotel," Ginsley says very softly. "I am here, but as you may know, I have changed my name to Ginsley. I thought I was the only Jew here. Did you give your real name when you registered?"

"Yes . . . my real name! And I pay good money!" Hitchcock rejoins bitterly.

Mr. Hitchcock makes so much noise putting the key into the lock when he returns to his room that he wakes his wife. She observes that he is not in good humor, but before she has a chance to ask the reason for his state of mind, he says, "Tomorrow we get up early and pack . . . the hell with this place! There are too many Jews here!"

## THE TALE OF A BEARD

WHEN Aaron Bloom arrived in this country in the early nineties, with his wife, two boys, and a daughter, he also brought with him a black beard, which ornamented his pale, intelligent face. His large black eyes completed the setting.

The small town in Lithuania from which he came was



a bearded community. All of its inhabitants had beards but none were as clean and well groomed as Aaron Bloom's.

It must be said that while Bloom belonged to the talmudic school, he also was acquainted with German and French literature, in Russian translations.

He had read three translations from the English. One by Jerome K. Jerome, "Appeal to Reason" by Thomas Paine, and a short biography of Abraham Lincoln.

Of course, the last two he had to read while hiding in a corn field, because such books were forbidden in Czarist days.

Like all immigrants in those days, Bloom, too, was confronted with the hardship of providing for his wife and children.

Since he was not fit to work in a factory and physically not strong enough to peddle, he managed to make a living by grinding horse-radish in front of a fish store, giving a few Hebrew lessons, and a little collecting for Jewish institutions.

As the years passed, his beard became tinged with silver and when his wife called his attention to this he smilingly replied.

"You know, Dinah, at this age I am grateful to God that I only have one wife. There is a story in the Talmud of a man who had two wives, one old and one young. The old one pulled out the black hair and the younger one plucked out the white strands, and he remained without a beard."

To this his Dinah spoke.

"If you would even have a half dozen wives, I wouldn't hurt you by pulling one hair."

Their eyes met and in their faces was the expression of everlasting love.

Years rolled by, his children grew up, and when he escorted his beloved wife to her grave, he had a full white beard—silvery, beautiful hair.

It was the first time in his life—in the seven days of mourning—that his beard had not been touched by brush or comb.

Of all the children, only his son, Oscar, had remained nearby, though moving into a new neighborhood.

With the consent of his daughter-in-law, the old man was asked to come to live with them.

The Jew with the white beard became a spectacular figure in the neighborhood. While it was admired by some of the older generation, it was a target for ridicule—stones in the summer and snow balls in the winter—for the youths of that community.

One evening after dinner old Aaron Bloom was finally persuaded by his son and daughter-in-law to shorten his cherished beard.

\* \* \*

As he followed his son to the barber shop, the father lamented.

"I can't understand. Don't these school children know that Abraham Lincoln had a beard; General Grant was not ashamed to be bearded; to everyone the poet, Longfellow, is so beloved—he, too, had a beard. Somehow I can't understand it, and on the other hand I can hardly blame the kids on the streets. Even when I come to the synagogue, I am the only one with a beard and everyone looks at me with curiosity."

"You said it, Pa," answered his son, indifferently.

Nervous and frightened, Aaron Bloom sat down in the barber chair. The walls were covered with mirrors, and wherever he turned he saw another Aaron Bloom.

## HERE TO STAY

In the homeland one didn't see such contraptions.

The barber spoke to Oscar in a sort of mysterious language. The barber smiled and the son winked. The scissors clicked over Bloom's head and pitilessly cut his hair, grown in a far land. Bloom felt a shudder over his entire body and his heart beat heavily.

"Don't cut my beard so short," cried the old man in dismay.

"Pa," interposed the son, "you can't go out into the street with such a long beard. You'll be stoned. We are in an American neighborhood. Just let it be touched up a bit. Just allow the long edges to be trimmed off—no more."

"My son," pleaded the old man, "in my old age, woe is me—I have never done it—woe is me!"

"Just touch it up a bit, the long ends only," the son directed the barber.

Patches of gray-white hair fell to the floor, and were moistened with hot, crystal tears from the old man's eyes.

## LUGGAGE UNPACKED

DUE to the innovation introduced into certain congregations of having Bar Mitzvahs on Friday night, Temple Gates of Heaven was overcrowded.

Relatives, friends, business associates, customers—both profitable and unprofitable—had all come to witness the Bar Mitzvah of Sammy, son of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Brooks.

It must be said that Sammy did not disappoint his parents, for his speech was delivered with effectiveness and emphasis. When he said, "Today I am a man," he won the confidence of all those assembled.

Rabbi Reuben Spitz impressed the audience with



his short oration when he charged the Bar Mitzvah.

Among the guests were Asher Boldinsky and his family. He was conspicuous because he had lately made a fortune in the luggage business.

Naturally, since he was one of the newly rich and with a wife who had the ability to climb high in society circles, a great number of people paid attention to him and his family.

Most of the people were impressed with their eight-year-old son, Alvin. Alvin was round and fat, with rosy cheeks in which Nature had implanted two dimples.

When Mrs. Rose Zucker noticed his rapt attention to the Bar Mitzvah and the rabbi she remarked, "That Alvin is so cute, I could eat him up."

A little later she said to him, "Alvin, darling, you were so interested in the Bar Mitzvah and the rabbi. Well, when you grow up, would you like to be a rabbi?"

Alvin smiled good-naturedly. "Oh, no. I will be a luggage man like my daddy."

When the child's reply reached the ears of his father, Asher Boldinsky rushed over to his wife excitedly. "Did you hear what our Alvin said? He wants to be a luggage man when he grows up. Hmphh, the nerve of the woman to even suggest to him that he might become a rabbi!"

During the hours the audience participated in enjoying the goodies spread out for them, Asher Boldinsky went from table to table telling his friends and relatives what a smart boy his Alvin was.

"Imagine," he said to one of his brothers-in-law, "my new factory out of town is my baby, and some day it will belong to my baby boy! Attaboy! The idea of asking him if he wants to be a rabbi! Believe me, he knows that the luggage business is all right."

\* \* \*

Six months later Alvin was hurt while playing with the other children. This necessitated taking him to a hospital. Of course, there was nothing about his condition that was alarming. His mother spent the mornings with him, and his father would drop in on his way home from his luggage factory.

Rabbi Reuben Spitz, spiritual leader of Temple Gates of Heaven, who was very much interested in the children of the members of the congregation, visited the young patient almost every afternoon. Alvin never failed to tell his father what a nice man the rabbi was.

While Mrs. Boldinsky telephoned the rabbi to express her appreciation for his kindness, Mr. Boldinsky did not consider it important to do so.

\* \* \*

It was an afternoon when Mrs. Boldinsky returned from the hospital to receive a number of women for a mah jong game. It must be said that these were not the same women with whom the hostess had played mah jong a few years before. They were newly acquired suburbanite friends who had also climbed to the same rung in the ladder of society.

When one of the guests expressed the hope that Alvin would soon come home from the hospital, it gave Mrs. Boldinsky an opportunity to tell her friends about the kindness Rabbi Spitz was showing to her son by visiting him almost every day.

"What else have the rabbis to do?" squeaked one of the mah jong players. "They don't deserve any thanks for that. I'll bet you that guy is trying to get your husband, who is one of the directors of the congregation, to help him get a higher salary."



The rest of the women had a good laugh at the expense of Rabbi Spitz, though Mrs. Boldinsky assured them that he was not a money man and if it weren't for his practical minded *rebbe*tzin, he would sometimes even forget to take carfare.

It was already late in the afternoon.

When the women were about to leave and were telling Mrs. Boldinsky what a fine time they had had, Mr. Boldinsky arrived.

His wife was frightened when she noticed his unhappy face.

"What's the matter, Asher?" she exclaimed. "Did you visit Alvin? I was there this morning and he was wonderful. As a matter of fact, the doctor said we might be able to take him home in a day or two."

"Yes, yes!" Boldinsky replied somewhat angrily. "The kid is all right. But something else happened and you wouldn't believe it. Can you imagine what he said?"

"What did he say?" she asked in bewilderment.

"Well, he said that when he grows up, he wants to be a rabbi!"

## THIS MATERIALISTIC WORLD

MAX ZAGORSKY rushes into his house . . . the tempo is one with which his wife, Dora, has been familiar for all these years.

Zagorsky is a very busy man. He never has time.

First a junk peddler, then the owner of a small junk yard, and now the proprietor of a large scrap metal establishment, employing fifty people in the yard, and a clerical staff, his mode of life has still not changed.

Something pulls him to mingle with the men in the

yard and to pick up and assort metal as they do. He does this from time to time; this is why he still has calloused hands, as in the old days.

As a matter of fact, two of the workers wanted to call a strike because he would not stay out of the yard. But the union business agent, a rather intelligent man, quieted them, saying:

"Well, the old man isn't just trying to save a few cents. He likes it. He's used to it. Let him have a good time."

"Did you prepare the Chanukah candles?" Zagorsky asks his wife as he enters the house. "Please, Dora . . . do it quick. I have no time!"

From the kitchen comes his wife's answer. "My God! I almost forgot that this is Chanukah eve! Just a minute, Max. Let me put the potatoes on the stove and I'll be right in. By the way . . . the shamash (sexton) from the shul brought the candles over this morning!"

"Did you pay him for them?" Zagorsky asks. Hearing no answer from the kitchen, his voice rises. "Didn't I tell you a thousand times that whenever our shamash brings things for the holidays you should not let him go back without paying him? You have no right to let him go with empty hands. You know he is not a banker! He has to make a living. My credit is good with the banks . . . with everybody! Except my own wife won't trust me enough to lay out a few cents for the shamash. Why . . . ?"

Zagorsky wants to say more, but at that moment the door opens and his younger son, Ben, comes in, carrying books under his arm.

The father addresses him, half in anger, half with sarcasm.

"Here he is, my educated son, my great professor. All he knows is books, books, and books. Fortunes I spend

on him. He could be a doctor, a lawyer. He comes home with a piece of paper from his university and he tells me he's a bachelor of philosophy. The devil knows what it is! All I know is I'm not as fortunate as the other fathers of my landsleit. I wouldn't give for that piece of paper the smallest piece of rusty iron!"

Mrs. Zagorsky, hearing her husband's loud voice and the argument she has heard so often before, comes into the front room with the candles. She, too, raises her voice.

"What!" she exclaims. "Again you are torturing the poor boy! What do you want of him? He told you a thousand times that in a few months he'll get another diploma. And then he will teach people in great schools. He will be a . . ."

"Aha! He'll be an English *melamed* (teacher). Is that it?" Zagorsky exclaims in anger. "What a fortunate father I am. I spend fortunes to have an English *melamed*. I would rather have him come and help a little bit in the yard, instead of monkeying with the books. And by the way, Dora, you'll be surprised. Metal is coming up . . . can't get enough. Fine people from the government come to talk about it. Instead of having my own son talk to them in nice English, I need strangers to do it for me."

On this score Mrs. Zagorsky feels that there is some justification in her husband's complaint. In a softer tone she says, "Come, come, Max. Pray over the candles. May God bring us help, there should be no more wars, and none of us should be missing. We should all be together."

That "be together" reminds Zagorsky that very shortly Ben may be called to the draft, and he will become a soldier.

The temper in which Zagorsky has entered the house disappears. His attitude has been changed by those two words.



As he approaches the candlesticks to offer prayer, he finds that Ben is waiting, as though the son desires to pray with the father.

"Pa," Ben asks, seriously, "do you think much of Chanukah?"

"What is that for a question?" Zagorsky asks. "Don't you know what Chanukah is? Remember . . . a handful of strong Jews broke every one of our oppressors, when they wanted to destroy our people and rob us of our Torah. They even broke into the Temple, and what not. Well . . . Don't you think we should celebrate how we showed them up?"

"Tell me, Pa," Ben continues. "Are Hitler and his murderous Nazis better than our enemies of old? Day by day we hear the lament of our unfortunate brethren abroad. He tortures them! Millions of them are uprooted. And millions of non-Jews suffer at the hands of the Huns. Is Hitler better than the murderers of centuries ago?"

"You are right, my child," Zagorsky speaks sympathetically. "But the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Who always watched over us and redeemed us when the hours were dark . . . He will help us again. You can never tell when God will perform miracles again."

"You are right, Pa," Ben says. "In this materialistic world it is a miracle that we still have young Jews with pride and courage. Men with the spirit of the Maccabees of old. To them I have attached myself. This morning I volunteered in our American army!"

From the kitchen comes an exclamation . . . "My God!"

## A RABBI'S MAH JONG BOX

THE majority of the directors of Temple Sons of Aaron were out on vacation. The president, Mr. Malkin, was also vacationing somewhere in Wisconsin.

In a letter to the vice-president, Mr. Bobinsky, in reference to Temple affairs, Mr. Malkin lamented over the fact that in the summer resort where he was staying the police had broken up all the slot machines. He concluded his letter by saying:

"To what is our free country coming to? It's gotten to the point where a guy has no right to spend his own nickel the way he wants to."

\* \* \*

In view of the fact that the president of the Temple was out of town, the vice-president surprised the directors in the city by calling a special meeting of the Board of Directors. In the letter to the members he stated, "We have a very serious problem before us, and don't fail to come."

\* \* \*

There was an air of expectancy and mystery when vice-president Bobinsky took the chair to open the meeting with the few who had remained city dwellers during the summer.

He began his remarks with the following:

"Fellow directors, please forgive me for calling you to this special meeting. It was my duty to do so in the absence of our worthy president. What we are going to transact here tonight is of great importance, and I am sure nothing of the proceedings will leak out."

The vice-president dwelt at length with the problem confronting the congregation, and time and again he offered apologies for disturbing the members. He finally got to the point.

"Gentlemen, my attention has been called to the fact that our rabbi, whom we all admire and respect, is spending his time playing mah jong. Quite a number of people who don't even belong to our Temple told me that they have often seen him carrying a mah jong set. Do you realize, gentlemen, what it means! Our spiritual leader who tells us every Friday night to keep up Judaism and to be good, he himself wastes his time in playing mah jong. Why, this is a reflection on our congregation. Here we organize a committee to go out and look for new members and our stock in trade is our rabbi; and we are told that he plays mah jong. How can we face the new prospects for membership?"

Director Sam Rudnick, who had it in for the rabbi, found the occasion to give expression to his feelings.

"Mr. Chairman, this talk about loving and admiring our rabbi is all bunk. A few weeks ago one of my best customers died. When I called our rabbi to officiate at the funeral I was told he was out of town. Of course, my customer could be buried without a rabbi. But since his widow and children intend to carry on the business, it would have been a great benefit to me if the rabbi had done me this favor, even when the deceased was not a member of our congregation. Well, I was told that the rabbi was somewhere out of town making a speech before a non-Jewish audience telling them how good we are. Is there any use, I ask you, to tell the goyim how good we are? *A nechtiger tag!*"

"You are not speaking to the point," vice-president

Bobinsky stopped him. "The question before us is how to check up on our rabbi who plays mah jong."

Sol Ginsley (formerly Ginsburg), who seldom made speeches but who had an analytical mind, then spoke.

"There are two ways to go about seeing what the rabbi is up to. Either we appoint a committee to do a little watching, or we employ a detective bureau and let them have one of their guys shadow the rabbi."

To this Sam Reich injected, "Who has time in these days to shadow the rabbi—no matter how good he is? My idea is, and I mean what I say, is to get a detective bureau, and believe me they will do the job."

The question of choosing a committee or engaging a detective occupied a large part of the meeting. At the decisive moment when a vote was to be taken, one of the directors, Rubie Stein, known to be a late-comer, appeared on the scene.

When informed of the reason for calling the meeting and of the proceedings thus far, he laughingly exclaimed.

"Why, guys! what is the matter with you? You are all crazy. Your heads are filled with sawdust. You will never guess about this mah jong business. Only last week I attended a wedding our rabbi officiated at. He carries the chuppah and the wedding paraphernalia in the mah jong box."

"Well, if this is the case," argued Rudnick with a wink in his left eye, "why not look into who is using the mah jong set at the rabbi's home?"

"Meeting adjourned," announced the vice-president with a wink in his right eye.



## ADVISING THE DOCTOR

WHEN Yente Leavitt entered the Jewish Home for the Aged, she was already three score and fifteen years old.

She had a lot to overcome before she was able to enjoy the comfortable and peaceful life which this institution with a soul offers to the lonesome and weary of our aged.

The Jewish Social Service Bureau did not hesitate to recommend her for admission, for all her children residing in the city were destitute. A few of them could not carry on their daily existence if they were not helped with funds from the Charities.

Mrs. Leavitt also stated in her application that she had a son in California. The Social Service Bureau corresponded with the Charities in that state. The following reply came back.

"The son of Mrs. Leavitt is a man of means. He does not contribute to charity, excusing himself with the fact that he is retired and he does not make any more money. He says that he wants to hold on to what he has in order to be secure in his old age. As for his mother, he informed us that as long as the Charities are interested in her, he hopes that she will be admitted to the home and he does not see any reason why she needs his support."

Many of the older directors of the Home for the Aged remembered when Yente Leavitt had appeared before the Board twenty years ago. How the members were moved by her sensible and touching plea. At that time she spoke in this wise.

"Isn't it enough that I am punished with a son who is rich and selfish? Isn't it enough that all my children, who would be more than willing to help me, cannot do



so? Please forget my rich son who has forgotten God and his old mother. Please admit me to your home."

\* \* \*

During the twenty years she had made her home in the institution, she had had a number of partners in her room to whom she was lovable and sweet. She cooperated with them whenever they needed help. Some of them left an indelible impression on her and she remembered them in her prayers three times a day when she visited the synagogue in the home.

In the early days, she would quite often ask the superintendent whether she couldn't do a little work in the kitchen, in the dining room, or any other light work, in order to make her feel that she was earning her board and room.

In his pleasant manner, the superintendent would always explain that no matter what work be given to her it would be hard for an old lady. Time and again he told her that she was in the home to rest and to enjoy her old age.

But there was one thing that disturbed the superintendent, the housekeeper, and her room partners.

It was habitual for Yente Leavitt to pick up two or three slices of white bread after each meal and bring them to her room. They tried to break her of this habit by explaining that crumbs of food were not sanitary. The pleas that she could get all the food she wanted between meals and that the pots for tea were always on the fire, were of no avail.

Yente Leavitt carried bread to her room without cease.

One afternoon after *minchah* (afternoon prayer) when Yente Leavitt was leaving the synagogue, the superintendent invited her to his office. She was not surprised

at receiving his invitation, for she felt that there was nothing serious involved.

After he invited her to make herself comfortable in a chair, he turned and spoke smilingly.

"Mrs. Leavitt, I read a good article in a medical journal last night which is very interesting."

She looked up with her bright eyes, and with her chin still showing the trace of a dimple, and pleasantly asked,

"What is a medical journal?"

"Well," he explained, "it is a magazine where they tell people how to take care of their health; what to eat; what to drink; and how to be well."

The words "what to eat" gave her the first alarm. Her pleasant mood was changed and she inquired suspiciously, "What has this magazine to do with me? I am feeling fine. I have all I need. I am not kicking."

"Well," the superintendent started to explain, "a prominent doctor has an article in this journal in which he explains that for old people too much white bread is unhealthy. It helps their digestion when they eat pumpernickel. Pumpernickel helps in many ways, while white bread is constipating."

Yente Leavitt looked into the face of the superintendent for a few moments and laughed.

"Many times you wrote letters for me to my rich son. Of course, he ignored my writings. That is not your fault. May I ask you at this time one more personal favor?"

"What is it?" asked the superintendent.

"Well," she said, "write a letter to this doctor and tell him in my name that if he is such a smart man and such a great *macher* let him get as old as I am and then tell me what I should eat."

## AN UNWELCOME PASSENGER

MRS. ROSE LEVIN was setting the table for supper when her husband, Lou, entered the house so quietly that she was taken by surprise, for this was not his usual manner of coming home.

"Aren't you feeling well?" Rose asked.

"I am feeling fine," he answered. "There is nothing the matter with me."

"Thank God for that," Mrs. Levin said. "I have just what you like for supper—sweet and sour fish and plenty of raisins in the gravy."

He glanced at her with a smile and stepped into the washroom.

Three years ago at this time, Rose had been free of all house work. Her husband, Lou, had a big income as partner in a profitable business. However, his partner took his son into the business and Lou was forced out.

Louis Levin started other enterprises, but they did not succeed. Now he drove a cab for a living.

Quite often sitting in his cab, he reminisced on the past. He was grateful to his wife, who had adjusted herself to conditions and made life comfortable for him even on his meager income.

When he once remarked that he was sorry she had to give up her social life and rich friends, she consoled him.

"As for the societies, I find my comfort and happiness in taking care of our two children. And as for our rich friends, believe me I find great satisfaction in the congeniality of the women who live in this building. They are honest-to-God people."

From the washroom, Lou stepped into the bedroom where the children were already asleep.

As he came into the dining room, he saw the sweet and sour fish on the table.

While he was eating, Rose noticed something was troubling him.

"Lou, it seems to me that something is bothering you. Please tell me what it is."

For a while he hesitated; then he spoke.

"Something happened this morning that made me gloomy all day. I know it was foolish of me to be affected this way, but I couldn't help it. Just imagine, of all the people that I get in the downtown district, I had to pick up the darling son of my former partner—the one who ruined me; the scoundrel who robbed me of my years of labor and brought me down to be a cab driver."

Agony and depression appeared on his wife's face. She asked, "Why did you take him into your cab?"

He answered apologetically.

"In the first place, I didn't recognize him for the moment. Secondly—I have no right to refuse a passenger when I have an empty car. Believe me, the half hour I travelled with him seemed like ages to me."

Rose listened to her husband's words and came out with a hearty laugh.

"What's so funny about that?" he asked in surprise.

One could read regret in her face for laughing. The information she was to convey to her husband was rather tragic. She quickly assumed a serious attitude.

"The other day one of the women in the building, whom I meet every day outside with her baby and who is a relative of your former partner, told me he is having a great deal of trouble with his son. The customers dislike him and he spends a lot of time at the races. Lately he has also taken to drink. As a matter of fact, the gossip is that his wife is about to sue him for divorce. You re-



member that he used to drive around in a limousine. But now he can't even do that because he is troubled with rheumatism. You see, now he had to come to you for help."

All this information was a surprise to her husband.

He wondered why he had not heard these things before. Of course, he could explain the fact to himself, since he never talked to anyone about his former partner or his family.

While he was sitting in the living room and comfortably reading the evening paper, Rose washed the dishes.

As usual he reminded her again, "Please, Rose, when you are through washing the dishes, call me and I will dry them."

Most of the time she did the whole job herself. Of a sudden she heard him calling her.

"Rose, look! Come here!"

His face lighted up. He showed her a news item that among those arrested in a well-known gambling house was the son of his former partner. It stated further that he was to appear in court tomorrow morning with a number of other gamblers.

Slapping his thigh with his hand, Lou exclaimed, "By golly, Rose, I know now where I drove him in my cab! I took him to court."

## TALK IS NOT CHEAP

"WHAT are you doing in this neighborhood in the middle of the day?" Benjamin Taback inquired of Solomon Brody, whom he noticed leaving a house in a poor section of town.

"I am a member of the Board of the Old Home," re-

plied Brody, "and I was here to investigate an old couple who had applied for admission.

"Let me tell you, my friend, quite often I begin to feel that it does not pay to get old, and more than ever I ask the question, 'Why raise children who deliberately neglect their parents?' Of course, this doesn't apply to this case, since there are no children."

Taback, not much affected by Brody's description of the old couple's plight, asked, "Tell me, how can you leave your business in the middle of the day? I know you have quite a number of people working for you. But you know what they say: 'With strange hands it's only good to shovel fire.'"

In impatient tones Brody replied, "I am doing this in the afternoon, in order not to disturb old, weary, and sickly people when they are about to retire. As for the help in my business, I trust them."

They walked for a few minutes in silence, and when they reached a corner where their ways parted Taback remarked tauntingly, "I believe that all your work is thrown out. I am told that the inmates of your old home are underfed and that they go to homes in the neighborhood to beg for food, because they do not get enough to eat at the home."

Brody hid his anger, and quietly asked, "Did you ever visit the Home, so you could check up on your false information?"

"No, I never have been there," Taback answered, "but, believe me, those who told me know what they are talking about."

Brody stood for a while petrified with anger. There were many things he wanted to say or do. At last he blurted out, "Taback, I'll make you a proposition. The superintendent of the home is not expecting us now.



Suppose you and I drop in at lunch time, which is in about half an hour. Then you will convince yourself that your information was all wrong."

"Vas noch," Taback sing-songed; "do you think I have nothing else to do but waste my time on such things!"

"But—but—," stammered Brody in a rage, "you took your time to criticize a fine institution. You . . ."

He wanted to say more but Taback walked away.

\* \* \*

Taback was more than surprised when, two days later, he received a letter from a prominent attorney, James Shapiro, who informed him that he was being sued for \$50,000 for maliciously slandering a charitable institution.

At first he laughed loudly to his bookkeeper. "What a damn fool that Brody is, suing me! For what? Can't a fellow say what he has on his mind?"

His bookkeeper, a practical girl, cautioned, "After all, Mr. Taback, if I were you I would call up your attorney. I think you ought to tell him about it."

When Taback hung up the receiver after talking to his lawyer, he was no longer laughing. Bin, his lawyer, had explained that when one is sued for such a huge sum, whatever the outcome, it may hurt his credit in the business world.

A few days later, a meeting was held in the office of attorney Bin with Taback, Brody, and Shapiro. "Look here," Bin started out, "I don't think you have a right to sue a respectable Jew in the community for making a casual remark."

"Well," Shapiro said, "if he is a responsible citizen he has no right besmirching the name of a community

## HERE TO STAY

institution, particularly when he has refused an opportunity to convince himself that he was misinformed."

After an hour of wrangling, Bin and his client held a whispered conversation in a corner of the room. Then Bin said, "Look here, Shapiro, my client is willing to give a \$500 donation to the home if you withdraw the suit."

After another whispered conversation between Shapiro and Brody, the former said, "Of course, we will have to take this up with the Board of Directors of our home, but I am sure that they will accept this settlement with my recommendation. But my client insists that in the next two months Taback visit the home twice a week unexpectedly and have a meal with the old people."

\* \* \*

The story doesn't end here.

Mrs. Taback is now being tormented by her husband to visit the kitchen of the home so she may perfect herself in the art of cooking a real, tasty, Yiddish meal for Rosh Hashanah.

## A GRAVE PROBLEM

A MAJORITY of the club members who knew Abe Weinberg would not dine at the same table with him. As he grew older he became more particular and exacting about his food.

One could read annoyance in the face of the waitress when Weinberg ordered roast beef, for she knew that she would have to go back to the kitchen many times to satisfy Mr. Weinberg's taste.

Yes, the matter of roast beef was a serious problem

with him. It had to be medium; if a little bit rare or perhaps too well done, it went back.

It was the first day for Sam Zeman, newly elected member of the club, who happened to be sitting at the same table with our roast beef expert.

Zeman introduced himself.

"I knew several members of your family," Weinberg said, in a matter of fact tone. "For some of them I had first mortgages on their property, for a few I carried second mortgages, and of course if the investment looked safe I helped them out with a third mortgage."

This introduction on the part of Weinberg placed the newcomer in an embarrassing position, relieved when the waitress came to take the order.

During the entire meal, Zeman remained quiet.

This gave Abe Weinberg an opportunity to boast, lament, and criticize. Among other things he said:

"Here I worked a lifetime to have a few dollars for a rainy day and the government takes most of it away from me. I'll bet that most of the papers in my box are not worth a —."

While Weinberg's remarks were far from a pleasant dessert for Zeman he still showed his politeness in agreeing with Weinberg, until the latter with increased bitterness and crudeness started to criticize present conditions. Then Zeman asked a question.

"How old are you, Mr. Weinberg?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Well," Zeman answered in an apologetic manner, "a friend of mine has just formed a cemetery syndicate where you might be interested in buying a lot, while you can get the best choice."

The fork and knife slipped out of Weinberg's trem-

bling hands and with an expression of fear and despair he rose and walked away from the table.

Zeman was rather pleased with what he had accomplished, but the waitress wondered why Weinberg hadn't waited for coffee and dessert.

\* \* \*

The club directors had a very exciting meeting. Some read complaints from members who could not use the library because children of the members had made it a playground. Other such grievances were read by the secretary of the club.

In the midst of these transactions, to their great surprise the door opened and Abe Weinberg entered. He had never before shown any interest in the management of the club. He had availed himself of all the club's services, but never so much as brought in one member.

"What brings you here, Mr. Weinberg?" the chairman of the board inquired.

"Look here," said the irate Weinberg, "I am one of the early members of this club and I don't bother anyone. If I want my roast beef served as I like it, I pay for the service. My coming here today is to ask you to make a rule that members shall not solicit customers for cemeteries. This club is to transact all kinds of business: real estate, mortgages, legitimate business—but who wants to be reminded of death and graves? It is a lot of nerve of guys to come here to utilize our club with death propositions. It's a shame. It's a——"

The members were astonished at Weinberg's complaint. They saw how his strength failed him as he tried to continue. The chairman assured him that his suggestions would be taken up by the board in due time. Weinberg left the meeting room silently.



While the members broke into laughter they heard a heavy thud outside the door. When they rushed out they found Weinberg stretched on the floor, his face up and his breathing labored.

He was carried into the reception room and comfortably placed on a couch. Ten minutes later he was declared dead by the doctor.

The undertaker whose application to become a member had been rejected time and again, now had the opportunity to enter the club to pick up a body in which there had been life a half hour ago.

Thus the board of directors was spared the need for a new decision and the waitress was relieved of roast beef problems.

## PA KNOWS IT

THE factory was buzzing with activity.

When Koppel Silk stepped in with his son Ben early in the morning, a great number of the workingmen whispered to each other.

"Here comes our crank, the boss, with his educated son, Ben. I wonder what kind of a boss he will make?"

Ben had just returned from the university where he had taken a course in business administration.

For almost two years Koppel had been telling everyone he would retire from his business very soon and that he would turn it over to his son. Then he and his wife, Dvoshe (Honey, in Hebrew) would retire to California to spend their old age.

When father and son entered the office, there were three men waiting to be interviewed by Ben.

Looking at them with authority the son took a seat in



the chair in which his father had sat for a great number of years.

Koppel took a seat on the right of his son, waiting to see how Ben would talk with the three men who had applied to be salesmen for his products.

"Well, boys," Ben started out, knitting his forehead, "I looked over your applications last night and it seems to me that you are all right. But, I will give you a few pointers on how to sell our merchandise.

"Always remember not to depend on 'shot-gun' sales methods. Be honest with your customers. Select one line each week and push it. It is the best investment always to say 'thank you.' It is a short speech, but if uttered at the right time in a cordial tone and with a cheery smile, it creates more goodwill than any other arrangement of words yet devised."

While old Koppel watched his son open-mouthed, wondering at the fancy words he had never heard before, Ben continued.

"Opportunity is everywhere. But it doesn't always knock the proverbial once—usually it waits for a cordial invitation to enter. You see, boys, business goes where it is invited and stays where it is well treated."

Ben stood up for a while and paced the floor of the office.

His father followed his every step with admiration. One could read his thoughts.

"After all, the money spent on my son was well invested. I wish I were an educated man. My business would be still more successful."

When Ben again occupied his seat, the telephone rang. It was his mother, Dvoshe, to whom he replied in this fashion.

"Please, mother, I am a very busy man now. I am in conference with three gentlemen who are going out to sell our products. I will see you tonight. Goodby. Oh yes, you want to talk to father? No? Well, he will be home early tonight."

Ben leaned back in his chair and with both hands resting on its arms he looked up at the ceiling in a philosophical attitude.

"Boys, very often you will be confronted with the problem of with whom to do business and with whom not to deal. Well, always remember: 'Decisiveness is an invariable characteristic of a successful man.' "

The face of old Koppel was covered with smiles when he heard the words "successful man." However, he was somewhat at a loss to understand the beginning of the sentence.

He stretched out in his chair, crossing his legs, and watched his son attentively as he continued.

"Solicitors divide themselves into two groups—those who get the order and those who try to. It is my firm belief that all of you will not be satisfied with trying only, but you will get the order. I remember one of my professors saying, 'Prospects are all around, but few are going to ask for applications.' "

Old Koppel opened his eyes widely when his son mentioned the word "professor." It was a magic word to him, who had never had a chance in all his life to meet a professor. His son had spent years among them. Now Ben was going to take over his factory, which he had started on a shoe-string and which was now so well-known in the industry.

"Now, gentlemen," Ben said, "are there any questions you would like to ask?"

The three men looked at each other for a while and then the youngest one, who had just returned from the Army, spoke.

"Mr. Silk, we appreciate very much your philosophy of business. But we would like to know something about your merchandise. For instance, which item to sell at a certain time and which item not to sell at a certain season. Which articles are more profitable and which are easier to produce."

"That's right," the other two agreed.

"Furthermore," the inquirer continued, "we would like to know if we are going to get specific territories to sell or are we to go out at random."

"That's right," the others repeated.

The graduate of the School of Commerce was lost for a moment. He was somewhat taken aback. But he collected his thoughts and in a timid voice replied.

"About all these things you will have to ask my father."

Koppel picked up his telephone and called his wife.

"Dvoshe! we are not going to California this year. I am afraid I will have to take care of my business."

## A SUCCESSFUL OPERATION

GERSHON ZASNITZ rolled an empty barrel into the basement of his grocery store.

Once the barrel had been filled with herring; now it stood outside all day and served as a receptacle for bits of paper and trash.

\* \* \*

Of course, this packed barrel on the sidewalk did not find favor in the eyes of Officer McCarthy. Of no one else in his beat would he tolerate such action. But McCarthy

was rather fond of old Mrs. Zasnitz. He once told her that she reminded him of his own pious mother. And once he complained to Mrs. Zasnitz that unfortunately the young Jewish women don't follow in the footsteps of their mothers.

"You know, Mrs. Zasnitz," he said, "I had the time of my life to convince my folks that not all the Jews have all the money. Sure and I know that all their women are dressed like millionaires. But I tell them that the furs and jewelry they wear are bought on installments and their husbands work for it."

While Mrs. Zasnitz was listening attentively to her friend, McCarthy continued. "By golly, this couldn't happen among us. We tell them where they belong when they demand too much."

"What do you mean by that?" Mrs. Zasnitz was astonished.

"What else can a fella do?" McCarthy shrugged his shoulders. "Our church doesn't permit a divorce."

\* \* \*

With a deep sigh Zasnitz sat down on an empty box.

"Again you're sighing," said his wife, cleaning the meat cutter. "I'm telling you again, Gershon, as soon as possible you should see a doctor and let him take off that bunion on your right foot. For a year you are suffering, and still you do nothing about it!"

"You are talking like a fool," he answered. "My bunion is after all a small matter. You know that a lot of our business comes from doctors. If you run through our list of customers you'll see that a third of them, may they enjoy good health, are doctors. So if one of them does my operation all the others will get angry, then we might as well close up the shop."



"I may be a fool, but you are talking like a child. Do you mean that because doctors are our customers we must always be sick in order to satisfy them? I suppose that if we had a dozen dentists for customers and you needed new teeth, then each dentist would get the work on one tooth? May it never come to that!"

He said nothing.

"My advice," she continued, "is that you give the operation to Dr. Bolin. He is a quiet man and will say nothing to anyone.

"I will tell everyone that you went to Detroit to visit relatives; in the meantime you will get rid of the bunion which has been paining your foot for such a long time."

"Dr. Bolin may be a quiet man, but his wife has the tongue of a witch. When she comes in here she tells everyone how many operations her husband performed and who pays and who doesn't pay. . . ."

"Yes, yes," Mrs. Zasnitz shook her head. "I, too, can tell her who pays and who doesn't pay."

"Well, anyhow," he declared, standing up, "I feel more rested now. I think I'll go over to Lubovsky to ask him if he will help me out tomorrow with a loan of ten dollars. I'll be right back."

Mrs. Zasnitz continued cleaning the meat cutter. There was a commotion in the street. She ran out and saw a crowd surrounding an automobile, the owner of which was trembling as a policeman bellowed that he must take the injured man to the County Hospital at once.

\* \* \*

For an hour Mrs. Zasnitz sat and waited until her husband was carried from the operating room into the ward. Seeing his pale face, she began to sob.



He took her hand and said softly, "Why do you cry? Thank God the automobile did not kill me altogether. Thank His blessed name that the wheel of the machine only injured a small part of my right foot, and luckily just in the place where the bunion was. They have fixed it, and I beg of you, please don't work too hard till I return home . . . without the bunion!"

### BUTTONED—AT LAST

BENNIE GOZOCK is not thought of as an ordinary boarder in the Hurwitz household. Somehow he seems to be one of the family. Mrs. Hurwitz calls him "my child"; Mr. Hurwitz himself, when he says "Bennie," does so with the same intimate ring in his voice one hears when he calls his own children. And Beckie, the daughter of the Hurwitzes, looks upon Bennie as a brother.

Upon landing in this country Bennie came to the Hurwitz home direct from the ship. He occupies the same room he did twelve years ago when he peddled with brooms. Now he is the proprietor of a prosperous clothing business, but that room is still his home.

The room in which he sleeps possibly does not befit a well-to-do clothing manufacturer, but to move from Hurwitz would throw him into a state of abject loneliness.

When Beckie was a little tot he continually kissed her and bought her pretty baubles; when she grew older she regarded him as a friend.

More than once he invited her to accompany him to the Jewish theater. But she would not go. "The neighbors will talk," she said.

To this Mrs. Hurwitz always answered, "Beckie, dear, you needn't be ashamed of Bennie. He is like one of our

children. If the neighbors talk, may their talk come true!"

The first time Reuben Lefkowitz, a thoroughly American young man, took Beckie out to a show, Bennie felt a fire at the pit of his stomach. "Why didn't my father and mother emigrate to America," he mused, "so that I might have been born here! Then Beckie would have no fault to find with me."

After Pearl Harbor Lefkowitz enlisted in the army. A year and a half later he was counted among the casualties.

When the sad news reached Beckie she broke into tears. And Bennie joined with the Hurwitzes in consoling her.

\* \* \*

"Bennie! Supper is on the table," calls Mrs. Hurwitz.

"I'm having trouble!" replies Bennie from his room. "I've got to go to a banquet and there are some buttons missing from my dress suit."

"All shoemakers go barefoot," laughs Mrs. Hurwitz. "Himself a clothing manufacturer, and still there are buttons missing on his dress suit."

Bennie goes into the kitchen for a needle and thread, encounters Beckie who is just coming from work.

Her cheeks have been tinged by the fall wind. The seal skin coat she wears adds a luxurious tone to her appearance. In Bennie's eyes she seems even more beautiful than before.

"Beckie, dear, you came just in time," remarks the mother to her daughter. "Bennie has to go somewhere and there are buttons missing in his coat. Be a good girl, grab a needle and thread and fix it for him. Meanwhile he'll eat his supper. It's already getting cold."

Bennie looks at Beckie; there is a plea in his eyes.

He awaits her answer, like one who stands before a judge with life itself in the balance.

"All right, mama," says Beckie.

\* \* \*

Bennie holds the coat while Beckie sews the buttons on. From the kitchen Mrs. Hurwitz finds time to catch a glimpse of them every little while.

"Are you going to a ball?" asks Beckie.

"To a banquet. After the banquet there will be dancing."

"Everybody will be dancing this winter," Mrs. Hurwitz chimes in from the kitchen. "Thank God, the war is over."

Beckie sighs faintly.

Bennie knows that he will be too late for the banquet, yet he would enjoy watching Beckie sew his buttons on for hours and hours.

Clad in his full dress Bennie feels more confident; somehow more at ease.

With a beating heart he says, "Wages are going up, you know. I owe you a great deal for sewing the buttons on my coat. Please allow me to pay you adequately."

"What do you mean?" she asks.

"It's too late to go to the banquet. I would like to go to the opera with you. . . ."

Mrs. Hurwitz, removing the dishes from the table, takes additional time for the last plate, before returning to the kitchen. She is anxious to hear Beckie's answer.

"That comes so unexpected," replies Beckie in a soft voice.

Bennie reads in her face that she has accepted his offer, and, like a happy child who cannot hide his glee, he runs to the telephone to call a taxi.

Soon the horn of the taxi is heard outside.

Bennie opens the door of the front room and remains standing for a while. "And if the neighbors talk, what then?" he asks with a sly look.

Beckie's naturally rosy cheeks take on a deeper hue.

And Mrs. Hurwitz cries from the kitchen, "May their talk come true!"

### TEARS IN THE SINK

OLD David Zarnets stands over the sink washing dishes. The tears drop from his eyes into the greasy water which the utensils have gone through.

It is almost ten years since his Sarah left him a widower. During that short time he has become reduced to a shadow of his former self.

Sarah left him two boys and three girls. All of them work in factories and he does the housework for them. He makes supper, scrubs the floors; in a word, does everything possible to satisfy his children.

Back in the old country, in Sherwint, Zarnets was one of the most respectable cab drivers. Here in America fate also made an expressman of him, and he remained one until he no longer had enough strength left to continue.

He must, however, work, keep up the house for his children, so that they may have somewhere to come to for a while. If not the family would disintegrate altogether.

In the paths which they are following, the broken old man sees many holes into which they may fall. And that is why the tears fall from his eyes into the sink.



"Say, Mike," remarks Ike, the older son, to the younger, "you had better not come to the poolroom to-night. The cops had an eye on you already yesterday. You know the guy from whose pocket twenty dollars was taken yesterday; he is making a lot of noise."

"And if twenty dollars was taken out of a man's pocket, what has that to do with Mike?" the old man asks in his feeble voice.

"Wash the dishes and shut up," Mike cries out. "It's not your business."

The old man is silent.

He casts a glance at his daughters who have eaten their supper as though they were beasts of the jungle, without blessing or grace. And now they are already standing before the mirror laying thick layers of paint and powder upon their faces. They do the same every evening. And they come home late, all danced out and fatigued, with the result that they are hardly able to get up in the morning when it's time to go to work.

But old Zarnets daren't say a word to them. They call him "greenhorn," and other unmentionable names.

"I am going out with the foreman of the shop," boasts one of the sisters. "He is all right. He is a real fellow."

Boom! trrrr! bang! A heavy pot which the old man is in the process of washing falls from his hands and breaks several plates.

"Don't go out with the foreman," Zarnets pleads with tears in his eyes. "Only yesterday you yourself said that he was a goy. How can you forget your mother? She will not be able to rest in her grave."

"There it goes again," the daughter cries. "Always he brings up mother. He expects us to lead the same sort of foolish life mother did. Nothing doing! We will have a good time and that's all."



"Say," breaks in brother Ike, "I don't like this stuff about you and the foreman either. If I ever hear of him getting funny with you, I'll clean him up!"

One after another, the children leave the house as though an evil wind were driving them. . . . The old man remains by himself. He recalls the time when the children were small, when his wife, Sarah, was young and pretty, the days when the boys began going to school and when he took them to the Hebrew School to learn how to be observant Jews. But they would not stay there. They mocked the old melamed whom they did not understand. It was in those immigrant days when teachers did not convey Jewish learning in the language of our land, and children did not relish the Hebrew School as they do today. At that time we had little hope to have as fine a generation as we are bringing up now with the new modern Jewish education.

He recalls the days when the children were growing bigger day by day; when they began earning money, became independent, and would no longer listen to his orders or advice.

He recalls sadly how they commenced to ridicule him and make fun of all Jews. And when he complained of this to a friend the friend merely remarked that it was America and one could not expect anything better of children.

David Zarnets knows, however, of many folks right here in America who have good obedient children. And he asks himself what are the sins for which God has punished him with such offspring. It is said that "he who honors his father and mother will himself in turn be honored by his children." That didn't seem to hold true with him; for he always obeyed his father and loved his mother.

He thinks of all this and then an old, old incident flashes up before his mind's eye.

It was in the summer time, on a Sabbath afternoon. His mother was entering the synagogue for afternoon services, and she found him in the synagogue courtyard playing buttons.

"It's a sin in the eyes of God and man. David, you mustn't play buttons on the Sabbath. Come into the synagogue for the afternoon services." So his mother pleaded.

He obeyed her and went into the synagogue, but soon afterwards he stole out into the yard again. He was drawn to the other boys.

As he recalls this, poor old Zarnets' face becomes drawn, and a dark hallucination flashes before him, as though a voice were calling to him from the grave.

"David, you did not obey your mother and therefore God has punished you with mean children. . . ."

A mysterious force seems to overpower him and almost automatically he picks up a prayerbook, and beating his breast, in the old orthodox fashion, he begins to sob and pronounce the confessional prayer.

When his neighbor, Mrs. Levy, rushes in to ask why he is crying, he calmly replies, "Oh, I don't know. I was just reminded of my faithful Sarah. She has left me so sad and lonely."

## WITH THEM IN SPIRIT

THERE is a legend that of the many miracles God performed for His people, one was that when the Jewish population in the rural districts of old Palestine came to the Temple in Jerusalem for the high holidays, the

walls extended and there was room for all the children of Israel in the crowded sanctuary.

The same thing happened to the Levy family when relatives, friends, and *landsleit* came to the party arranged in honor of their three sons and one son-in-law who had returned from overseas, from many theaters of war.

Old Simon Levy, returning from the Kavarsker Synagogue where he had offered his customary daily evening prayers, was delighted to find so many people gathered in honor of his children.

Hands were outstretched to him with greetings of *mazel tov* from all sides. To all, he had one answer, "*A dank Gott.*"

At other occasions of lesser importance, he would find his beloved wife, Dina, busy in the kitchen. But this time she was dressed in her best and looked like one of the guests.

There was nothing for her to do, for the long table was covered with all kinds of good kosher food, stacks of plates, forks, and knives, and other eating utensils.

"What are we waiting for?" Levy proclaimed cheerfully. "Let's move the chairs around the table; wash our hands; make *hamotsi* and eat."

At this point Dina took him by the hand and invited him to the kitchen to talk to him.

"You see, Simon, our daughter-in-law, Zindra, who is stylishdik, helped prepare all this on the table. The stylish people call it buffet supper. You see, they all sit with their chairs near the wall; then they form a line; each one takes a plate; fills it up with food; and then they go back to their chair and eat by themselves. My sister Rosie is at one end of the table and pours the coffee, and my sister Sheindel, who is at the other end,



will ask them if they want tea. You see they call it stylish-dik. You know, Simon, how it is. Young people do it their own way. Of course, they tell me it's less work."

The confused husband looked at her with amazement, and shrugging his shoulders exclaimed:

"You mean to tell me that they all eat by themselves—no prayer—no *hamotsi*—no saying grace in unison? Did they all come just to eat; each one like a pig in his own sty? Ach! I don't understand it! I would want them to sit around the table so that they can talk to each other."

"You see," Dina explained, "there are too many people and they can't all be seated around a table."

"*Narishkeit!*" Levy called out in anger. "You remember what we did at our boys' *Bar Mitzvah*. When some of our guests were through, they got up from the table and made room for others. No, Dinah, if this is what you called buffay-shmay-dray—I don't like it. Look, there are Yankel, Moshe, and Berel. How can we talk to each other when we are spread out all over the room? I don't want to be pushed when I am carrying a plate of food. I never did it in my life, and I am not going to do it now. I don't want to spoil my *simchah* with buffay-dray-shmay business!"

The loud conversation attracted the attention of one of the returned soldier sons, who came in during these words between father and mother.

He tried his utmost to convince his father not to disturb the plan laid out by his sister-in-law—but to no avail.

Of course Simon did not argue any more . . . he protested in silence. . . . He didn't want to grieve his boy whom he had not seen for two years and for whom he had prayed in the synagogue three times a day.

Mother and son returned to the dining room where

the process of filling the plates was already going on with full speed. On all sides could be heard, "Have some more of this" or "Have some more of that."

Father Levy was missing in the turmoil and noise of clattering dishes.

He was back in his little synagogue offering his thanks to God for the safe return of his children.

### AN ARGUMENT IS WASTED

BENJAMIN ISRAEL has the reputation of being a cheerful and pleasant bachelor. While his numerous friends in the outside world, particularly women, are still trying to match him with a daughter of Zion, the Horowitzes with whom he has lived from the day he came from the old country, have lost all hope. To them he is a confirmed bachelor.

This may be due to the fact that time and time again he has said, "Why should I get married, since I have such a good home with you?"

Benjamin Israel has made progress in his business and could easily afford to live in a much more comfortable place than the Horowitzes. However, to lessen the burden of their responsibilities, he has been having his dinner in a corner restaurant downtown. His meal is always composed of vegetables, for notwithstanding the fact that he has been in this country for thirty years, he still adheres to the Jewish dietary laws.

We find him tonight, as always, sitting at a table at the same corner restaurant and watching with a critical eye the young women passing by.

Although he is sympathetic, he agrees with our prophet Isaiah who admonished the daughters of Zion.



"On that day will the Lord take away the beauty of their tinkling shoe-buckles, and the hair-nets, and the crescent-shaped ornaments.

"The drops, and the bracelets, and the mufflers.

"The bonnets, and the foot-chains and the head-bands, and the tablets, and the earrings.

"The finger-rings, and the nose jewels."

A smile appears on Israel's face when he pictures daughters in Zion wearing jewels through their noses.

He argues with himself. "Why is this more shocking than to see the women of today in a cold winter day wearing fur coats and at the same time having their toes stick out through their shoes?"

The other day he heard someone say, "If a man has his toes through his shoes, he is considered a bum; but with a woman it is stylish."

\* \* \*

"How are you?" someone greets him unexpectedly.

It is Laura Berman, a stenographer to a merchant with whom Israel deals. She is of the intellectual type.

She explains that she has night work and since she is not going home for supper, she has rushed in to have a bite. She gladly accepts the invitation of Israel to be his guest at his table.

"You will have no objection if I order a ham sandwich," she inquires with a twinkle in her eye.

"You are my guest and it is therefore my duty to make things comfortable for you and you should eat the things that appeal to you."

If Miss Berman were a better student of human nature, she would see through Israel's courteous reply. But she does not.

She orders a ham sandwich.

The silence of her host disturbs her, and since he says nothing, she speaks up.

"Mr. Israel, isn't it about time that our people gave up those nonsensical things—what to eat and what not to eat? Granted that all these prohibitions were essential in olden days, in our days when science has found ways even to make ham safe to eat by curing it, why not have it?"

To Israel her question sounds ignorant and ridiculous. After a long pause, he replies.

"Why argue about something that is so unimportant in our serious everyday life? The fact remains that ham comes from a pig. . . . This alone makes it abhorrent. Furthermore, we have never heard of anyone dying from gefilte fish, but we do hear often of someone getting ptomaine poisoning from oysters."

"Mr. Israel, I am really surprised to hear your views in this matter. I had an idea that you are more liberal than that!"

Israel, noticing her tone, tries to create a more pleasant atmosphere.

"You remind me of King Jeroboam who sinned and who induced Israel to sin. But, my darling, you won't victimize me!"

Both of them laugh.

Benjamin Israel is almost through with his meal but his companion has not yet been served. It pleases him that the ham sandwich has not yet appeared on the table.

"It takes hours these days," Miss Berman complains, "to be served. Here I have to go back to the office and I haven't yet gotten my food."

At this moment, the waitress appears and in a matter-of-fact manner explains.

"I am sorry, we are all out of ham."

#### FOUR ABREAST

FOUR young Jewish mothers wearing slacks in a variety of colors and all puffing cigarettes were pushing buggies on the avenue on the way to do their shopping on the Sabbath day.

If one listened to their conversation, he would discover that their discussions are limited to chimney-like hats, thimble-shaped bonnets, and the good times at certain parties.

As for the four babies, they were of a variety of types—but cute. It would take an experienced anthropologist to define the shapes and looks of the babies, nicely dressed and seemingly well-fed.

Since the four mothers were occupying the entire sidewalk, a number of the pedestrians were obliged to go on the street in order to pass them. Some did it pleasantly, indicating their love for babies. Others felt indignant.

One of the mothers suddenly burst out with a complaint that her husband had not been feeling well lately. Her mate is her former boss. Although he was ten years her senior, it was a great day for her when she could tell the other girls, "You see, our boss picked me out of all of you."

When one of the girls asked her why she had married a man so much older than herself, she said angrily, "I worked hard all my life. I am entitled to have a home with all the comforts."

One of the young mothers laughed.

"You had better see if your husband's life-insurance premiums are paid up."

But the ailing husband's wife reassured them.

"There is no danger. My husband just has a little cold and I am sure that in a day or so he will be back on his feet."

"Say, girls," one exclaimed, "I had an experience the other day I'll never forget. My husband took his father and mother to the Yiddish theater. Although I am not interested in such things, I felt that it was my place to go with them. On the way home, we stopped in a restaurant for a cup of coffee. The old folks ordered coffee and cake, and I ordered a half dozen oysters. To be honest with you, I love it; I relish it. Well, there was almost a riot. My father-in-law became red like a beet and my mother-in-law turned pale and trembled like a leaf. Both of the old timers were ready to leave.

"But my husband—poor boob—was between two fires. . . . He held them back by pleading that since they lived so far away he had to take them home in the car. On our way home they didn't say a word to me, and when I reached my home my husband had plenty to say."

One of the women turned philosophical. "I for one believe that we should not aggravate our old folks. We will never be able to change them to modern ways of living. I too enjoy oysters, bacon, and a good ham sandwich, but I would never dare to eat them in the presence of any of the old folks of our family. After all, one can forego those things for the sake of keeping peace in the family."

The oyster eater had nothing to answer and stopped in front of a store to buy something. She asked the other three to watch her baby until she came out.

One of the remaining three said, "Honestly, girls,



isn't she a darn fool eating oysters in the presence of the old folks? As it happens, I know them. They are kind and charitable. They would do almost anything to help someone who is in need and their daughter-in-law is a darn fool to hurt their feelings."

The other two had nothing to answer to the admonition of their friend.

Soon the fourth partner left the store with a couple of bundles and the procession of the four buggies proceeded.

"The war is over," she said with bitterness as she placed the two bundles over on her baby, "and the grocerymen are still independent. Honestly, I ate my heart out for the few things I bought. Who does he think he is—a *gantzermacher*?"

"They are all alike," one agreed.

The number of pedestrians had increased when they reached the end of the block. Unfortunately, the young mothers were so absorbed in their conversation they did not sense the resentment of the walkers who wanted to pass by.

One elderly woman with a dog on a leash also had to go on the street. She screamed at them.

"Good Lord, since the Jews moved into this neighborhood there is no room for us to walk on the sidewalk!"

There was a commotion on the part of the four mothers, who tried to reform their parade so that there be room enough to pass by.

One of them looked with anger at the old lady and fired back.

"Look here, skinny bones, our babies some day may have to be soldiers and fight for you. But your dog fights a poor peddler when he comes to your door!"



## TROUBLE IN INSTALLMENTS

WHEN most of the Jewish summer resorts in Junkville, Michigan, installed modern improvements in the rooms of their hotels, Yankel Knacker refused to do so.

His argument was as follows.

"If the 'yehudim' want hotels, there are enough of them in the big city. I am a farmer, and they come here in order to enjoy farm life on their vacation. My guests are 'heimishe menshen' and they don't look for high style. They just love to get cold water from my pump in the yard. As a matter of fact, Yente Pupik told me the other day that pumping water is the best way to reduce her weight."

Between us, while farmer Knacker boasted of his farm, not only his guests, who arrived either by boat or automobile, came from the city, but the eggs, meat, and other provisions also came from there. The only two features that reminded the guests of farm life were the pump for water and the flies that reigned supreme in every nook and corner of the farmhouse.

A service man, who had just returned from the Philippines and was visiting his parents, who were vacationing at the farm, expressed regret for not bringing with him the mosquito netting he used to protect himself from the insects while he was in the Pacific. According to his opinion, the flies and insects on this farm enjoyed more liberty, freedom, and "constitutional" rights, than the insects in the Philippines.

When the mother of the service man complained to farmer Knacker about fixing the screens in the bedrooms, his reply was characteristic.

"You of all people should know that there is a war on.

Your own son is still in uniform. The hardware stores are out of screens, and besides, none of my guests has as yet died from the bite of a fly. Believe me, my wife and daughter suffer enough to keep the flies out of the kitchen and dining room."

As usual, it was all turmoil and commotion on a Monday morning when a number of the guests were going back to the city.

One of the guests at the farm was Mrs. Rose Bonde, whose husband, a modest wage earner, had provided her with a ten day stay at Knacker's farm. In order to wash her hands, she took off her ring, and in some way or another the ring disappeared.

Farmer Knacker assured her positively that he knew all of the guests to be honest, upright, and with "yiddishe hertzer." He rebuked her for misplacing the ring.

Mrs. Bonde, broken-hearted, searched for her precious article all over the house, on the porches, in the yard, and especially around the pump, where she drank water every morning with the hope of finding it. But alas, it was not to be seen.

The news of the loss spread among the guests and each one tried his best to cooperate with her. But it was to no avail.

In the midst of all this, Simon Burak, one of the star boarders and chief story teller, in order to lighten the sorrow of Mrs. Bonde told her the story of a Mrs. Cohen who wrote her husband that during the four weeks that she had been on her vacation she had lost one-half her weight. Consulting her husband as to how much longer she should remain in the country, he replied, "Four weeks more."

Everybody had a good laugh. But it didn't help the depressed Mrs. Bonde.

Like a stroke of lightning from a clear sky, Moses Stone, a prosperous customer peddler, appeared.

When he inquired about all the noise, he was told that Mrs. Rose Bonde had lost her ring.

Raising his voice and pointing his finger in the face of the unfortunate Mrs. Bonde, he declared, "Look here, Mrs. Bonde, it isn't my business that you lost your ring. The fact remains that your husband is already behind two payments on the ring which he purchased from me on installments. Furthermore, your husband has no right to send you to the country at my expense. I don't want to know anything. I want my money or the ring."

### A WINDOW DISPLAY

It was late in the evening, when Mr. and Mrs. Solomon Belsky were sitting in their half empty grocery store without saying a word to each other.

The emptiness expressed itself in the lack of customers and the shelves with very little merchandise on them. Both of them would now and then examine the shelves and then glance at each other with despair in their eyes.

"Here you are," Mrs. Belsky said at last. "When you pay your bills you are visited by salesmen of every grocery house urging you to buy from them, but the minute you get slow in meeting your bills they are through with you. You remember that smart aleck salesman Joe, who would address me as 'Mother' each time he came, until I told him I don't constitute an incubator to be the mother of all grocery salesmen. You see even he doesn't show up any more."

There were a few moments of silence and then Hannah continued.

"I begged of you, Sol, not to be so free with credit to everybody. Now they have filled up their stomachs with our groceries and we are left without goods, without customers, and without money."

Solomon remained quiet for a moment and he then came back in a melancholy tone.

"Who can understand our people when one bluffer is bigger than the other? Take for instance Mrs. Globush, who entertained company every night, feeding them at our expense and telling us that her husband was making a fortune in real estate. Mrs. Rosenblatt never failed to tell us that her husband's jewelry business increased so much that he didn't know where to invest his money. And the same stories we heard from others. Of course I, as an old talmudist, should know the proverb, 'Honor them and suspect them.' "

"All in all," Mrs. Belsky replied, "why should I blame you? I was always in the store with you and I should have brought more pressure on you to be careful who you give credit to and not listen to the big mouthed 'fres-sers.' "

A few moments later Solomon suggested to his wife, "There is no use for both of us to stay here in the store. You go home and take a rest. I am sure that Ben will be back soon from visiting the relatives."

Ben was their older son, just released from the army after having served three years overseas. They were somewhat disturbed about him.

The business house he had worked for years before had no job for him. The proprietor explained that he had made enough money so that he had decided to move



to California to live, where he would spend the rest of his days in comfort.

In addition to Ben, ten others who worked for the same firm were compelled to look for jobs.

Solomon Belsky had remarked to his wife on coming home from the synagogue:

"Here is the difference between a 'pasqudniok' and a God-fearing man. Our Ben has to look for a new job, because his boss who is still healthy and strong wants to go to California to retire. On the other hand, Sam Lubin, whom I met in shul, told me that he too has enough money to retire but he owes it to his people, who worked for him all these years, to keep the business running. As a matter of fact, he is giving each one of his employees a few shares in his business."

\* \* \*

While Mrs. Belsky was surprised when her husband came home late, she was more surprised when he insisted that she shouldn't come to the store early the next day. She did take advantage of a few hours extra at home.

When she came to the corner near the store later in the morning she noticed a number of women, many of them familiar faces of customers who had not shown up for a long time, going in and out of the store. Most of them were slamming the door in anger. . . .

This is what she discovered.

Her husband, with his talmudic mind, had applied his wisdom to collect the outstanding accounts. He had pasted a list on the window of customers who owed him money and had stopped trading there.

Like lightning the report spread over the neighborhood.

The effect was terrific.

Women came, some in anger, and paid in full. Some begged for a few days' grace with a solemn promise that they would pay in order to have their names removed. Mrs. Belsky stood amazed, watching her husband taking in the money.

When all was over she said, "I believe we had better move from this neighborhood now."

He answered, "Yes, we have enough money to open a store some place else, but believe me, no more credit!"

### WHEN FRIENDS CONSPIRE

THE usual happiness and congeniality prevail at the supper table of the Rottenberg family. They are father, mother, son David, and daughter Lena. Both the children are university graduates and hold responsible positions. Once in a while they hint to their parents that they should move into a better neighborhood, but not with much pressure, because they do not want to disturb their parents whom they love. They realize that the folks would prefer to remain where they are.

Of course Dave and Lena have their young friends in other parts of the city. Lena belongs to a cultural club miles away and Dave is active in civic organizations and belongs to a down town Jewish club.

This evening again Lena asks her mother whether she may help in the kitchen, and Dave announces they are not going to eat until mother comes to the table.

All the food is placed before them and they enjoy mother's palatable cooking. As a matter of fact the father makes them feel again that this is the best meal mother ever cooked.

The telephone rings and Dave is the first to pick up the receiver.

Some one is asking for his mother. For almost five minutes the rest listen to mother saying, "Oh yes, I'll be glad to do it." "It will be a pleasure and they will all be glad to meet you."

When she finishes the conversation she approaches her family with a beaming face and says, "Folks, this is surely a surprise. Our old friend, Hannah Barsky, poured out her heart to me; she is very lonesome in the suburbs where she now lives and she would like to meet all the *landsleit* whom she hasn't seen for a long time. She wants me to invite them to our home and she and her husband will drive over to see them. She explained that it would be a hardship for some of them to come to her home due to the distance."

Dave looks into his mother's face and smiles. "Ma, I know why Mrs. Barsky got so lonesome for her old friends. The other day she came to the club with her husband wearing a fur coat that looked like it cost real money; as a matter of fact she appeared like 100 dollar bills were pinned on her nose. I am sure that she wants to exhibit it to her old friends."

While father and daughter exchange glances, Mrs. Rottenberg is absorbed in thought.

"Is that the reason?" she says to herself. "I will see what I can do for her."

\* \* \*

The Rottenberg flat is overcrowded with *landsleit*. While most of them are from Slabotka, some have intermarried with Galicianer, who also feel at home.

One wonders why they all are silent. There must be a reason.

There is a knock on the door and Mr. and Mrs. Barsky arrive.

When Mrs. Rottenberg wants to help Mrs. Barsky take

off her coat she says, "O thank you, it was quite a long trip and I am still chilled. I will wear it for a while until I get warm." Cynical eyes on all sides almost penetrate the walls. Mrs. Barsky does not notice anything. Her husband, however, understanding his wife's pretense, acts as if he does not see the glances. He lights a big cigar and reminds her to take off her coat.

When Mrs. Barsky finally removes her coat her friends switch to many topics of past days, but no one remarks about the coat.

"Rose," says Mrs. Abraham Lintz (formerly Mrs. Cohen), "how well I remember the day when you assumed the name of Barsky."

"I can go further than that," interjects Mrs. Goldy Corn. "I remember when Mrs. Barsky and myself worked in the same hosiery factory and the boss would always say, 'Rose, if you knew how to figure and how to write I would make you for a stock-keeper.'"

A short woman sitting on the couch by the window calls out shrilly, "Why, I remember Rose from the old country as a little girl. She used to bring a quart of milk to our house each morning. Her father had two cows and they sold milk to the neighbors."

Barsky is obviously not satisfied with the reminiscences brought up at the expense of his wife.

The smoke rings go up fast. He suddenly remarks, "It feels good to come to this neighborhood once in a while. I tell you folks I am sick and tired of the big stiffs in the suburbs where we live. Believe me, the smell of cornbeef in this neighborhood is refreshing to an old timer."

The woman with the shrill voice exclaims, "Well, suppose you made money and you became a wealthy man, was this a reason to desert your friends and move to a place where nobody knows you?"



At this remark gloom and depression cover the face of Rose Barsky. All this again reminds her of her lonesome life where the neighbors don't know her and even some of the wealthy Jewish families have little to do with her or her husband. And while she is immersed in this thought some of the couples start to say good night and leave the house. Within a short while they are all gone. The face of Mrs. Rottenberg, the hostess, is flushed. She relieves her embarrassment by saying, "Well, since they are all gone, I'll now make tea for us and we can visit."

On the way home Mrs. Barsky sighs deeply to her husband, "Who would ever think that people would be so jealous?"

He does not answer. He blows more rings of smoke from his cigar.

### DIVIDED ATTENTION

IT WAS in those days when a spirit of romanticism swept over the daughters of Israel throughout Poland and Lithuania.

The sixteen-year-old Rebecca, daughter of Moshe the baker, who helped her father in the bakery and was a great expert in beautifying the *chalah* for the Sabbath day, was also caught in the spirit of the time.

She didn't miss one of the novels translated by Yiddish writers from the French and Russian.

All the girls at that time spent the Sabbath day in reading such books while their mothers read the portion of the week from the Bible.

These young girls dreamt about a tall, handsome, young man with a dark, curled-up mustache, who ten-

derly kissed the hand of a lady. Such characters were far removed from their own real lives, since their fathers seldom kissed their mothers. . . .

The parents of Rebecca had no hardship in convincing her that Jacob, the son of Isaac the lumberman, would make her a good husband. True, he could not read or write; he was only well-versed in the prayer book. However, his outer appearance corresponded to the good-looking men about whom she read in the novels. He had rosy cheeks, a black mustache with turned-up tips, dark eyes, and a pleasing smile.

When a fire destroyed their little town, a number of the young people were forced to migrate to America. Among them were Rebecca and her husband.

Jacob's knowledge of the lumber business in the old country, could not be readily applied to the same business in this country. The only job he was qualified for was carrying pieces of lumber from one place to another. Therefore, upon advice of friends, he became a presser in a clothing factory.

Rebecca, at the same time, though working hard to make a comfortable home for her husband, had enough time to read Yiddish papers in which novels were printed in serial form. These novels, of course, were of a different type from those she read in Europe. They all dealt with Jewish life.

Rebecca and Jacob joined a lodge wherein husband and wife could be equal members.

During one of the meetings of the lodge, the president asked for volunteers to serve on the sick committee. To Rebecca such committees were well-known, for her father used to visit the sick in the old country. Of course, here it was quite different. Over there a member would have

to stay all night with the sick person, acting as nurse. While here the sick were visited to determine whether they were entitled to sick benefits. . . .

Rebecca was very proud when her husband stood up and volunteered to act on the committee. Since he was the first to respond, the president appointed him chairman.

It was a source of satisfaction to Rebecca that a great turn had taken place in the life of her husband. Since he had to report at each meeting on his visits to the sick, he became accustomed to speak in public. From week to week he acquired a technique of his own. Of course, being sympathetic, he reported favorably on all cases. Rebecca was happy to see him gaining prominence among the brethren of the lodge.

From Jacob's fair income as a presser they raised a fine family. As a matter of fact, his good wife managed to put away a dollar or two for a rainy day.

The time came when the children also were in position to contribute to the support of the household.

Jacob kept on visiting the sick for a number of years until the lodge doctor declared him ill from overwork and advised him to stop using the heavy press iron.

Rebecca was not too alarmed when he came with this disturbing news. She consoled him.

"We have nothing to worry about. All you need is a good rest. As a matter of fact, you can stop working altogether. With the few dollars we have saved and with the help of our children, we can carry on. You and I are going to have pleasant times."

The pleasantness consisted of visiting institutions, going to Yiddish theatres, and attending meetings.

One beautiful morning Rebecca suggested to her husband that they visit some places of general interest that

had nothing to do with Jewish affairs. They went to the Art Institute and other institutions of the same character.

It was three o'clock when they reached the Museum. Both stared with amazement at the beautiful and strange things they saw. Everything looked fascinating. When Rebecca noticed a sign on the door which read, "The Museum will close at 5 P. M.," she studied the matter.

"Jacob," she said, "I have an idea! We will never be able to go through this beautiful place in two hours. Here is my suggestion: You go to the *right* and see everything and I will go to the *left* and see everything. When we come home, you tell me what you saw and I'll tell you what I saw, while we have our chicken soup and noodles for supper. I left it on the stove. All we have to do is warm it up."

### GEFILTE KISHKE ON V-J DAY

THE restaurant was overcrowded. This was the only eating place kept open on the busy street of a large Jewish neighborhood on V-J Day.

The proprietor, Joseph Simpkin—known to his customers as Joe—made a thorough explanation why he had not closed the doors of the restaurant.

"I work in this place from morning to night every day in the week, so I have not been able to make other friends except my customers. My two boys and eleven nephews are coming back home. Most of my customers also have dear ones who are going to return. That is why I want to celebrate this day with my customers."

To prove himself still a well-meaning fellow, Joe treated all his old friends who could not find any other place to eat, with *kishke* and *lokshen kugel* free of charge—and plenty of it. He did more than that. He



telephoned the brewery for two barrels of beer and told them plainly, "This is on you. I will treat my customers today and will tell them this is on me."

The noise and turmoil drowned out all the voices. But the voice of Jack Mark, a merchant tailor a block away, could be heard. He stood up, and waving his right hand in the air, called out:

"If I were General MacArthur, I would give that yellow dog Hirohito a real job. Imagine, that guy owns three and a half million acres of land and has a lot of money in railroads and what not. Believe it or not, he is the owner of the largest hotel in Tokyo, where American visitors spent their money before the war. I would dress Hirohito up as a bell-boy in this hotel and let him bring up ice water to the American soldiers. This is the job I would give that guy."

Laughter came from every table and appetite for the *kishke* and the *lokshen kugel* was increased.

\* \* \*

At a table in the corner, all by himself, sat Dr. Joseph Gurevitch, whose dental office was above the restaurant while his home was far north. He would drop into the restaurant quite often to have a bite to eat.

In the midst of the cheer and jollification no happiness was expressed on his face.

While the great number of people gathered there hoped to have their dear ones back home soon, his young son, who had enlisted as a young physician, and his younger brother, also a medical man, would not return. Both of them had made the supreme sacrifice for country and mankind.

Never before could he so clearly realize how much the sweet companionship of his young brother and the happy

childhood of his son meant to him. All the joy of his son's boyhood years came before his eyes as he paced the floor and took his seat again.

At this moment, he was greeted by his good friend Ben Lubin, owner of a haberdashery up the street, and considered a very intelligent person. Lubin had stood by his friend Gurevitch during the tragic hours, when the sad news came of a missing brother and a lost son. He realized that his coming to the restaurant for a cup of coffee brought him also to comfort his friend and to give him strength.

Instead of his usual cheerful manner, he approached his friend in this wise.

"Look here, doc, cheer up. Don't be foolish. With a little deeper thinking you will find out that you too may have reason to rejoice. For the very reason that you sacrificed dear ones to save humanity from tyranny. Look what happened in our neighborhood to some of our friends who did not have to go overseas. Our friend Aaron Berl lost his young wife, one of the sweetest women on God's earth, in childbirth, and in the very same afternoon one of his uncles was killed by an automobile.

"Do I have to tell you what happened to the Zager family—one daughter had to be taken to Elgin; her mother died of a heart attack; and their only boy was afflicted with infantile paralysis. All this misery, all this tragedy, had no purpose. Your great loss was for a great purpose. Come on, have a cigar."

Dr. Gurevitch and Lubin sat with their heads turned to the ceiling, blowing smoke rings from their cigars.

After a while, Dr. Gurevitch turned to his friend.

"Ben, after all, what is it all about?"

"What's the use asking?" Lubin answered, blowing another smoke ring.

## FRIENDLY ENEMIES—KOSHER STYLE

TARSKY and Barsky met again on the elevated train on the way home from their daily tasks.

The characterization of "friendly enemies" could be most aptly applied to them. Let us emphasize the fact that they had the best feelings towards each other in business matters. Both handled the same line of merchandise and were located only three doors apart. Very often, if one was short of an item to fill an order, he was helped out by the other.

However, their attitude was quite different when religion became the topic of conversation. Tarsky was a member of the Slobodker Congregation and Barsky was an active board member of a reform temple.

When Tarsky explained to his traveling companion that he was not going home because his wife was out of town and that he was going to have his dinner in the neighborhood kosher style restaurant, Barsky joyfully said, "I am going with you too, because my wife is visiting her mother this evening. So we will eat together."

After they ate the chopped liver, Tarsky again started to twit Barsky about his belonging to a reform temple.

"Look here, Tarsky," answered Barsky, "if one of the old timers, one of those who goes to the synagogue three times a day, and when he rises up and when he lies down the name of God is always on his lips, should ask questions, I would have the deepest respect and regard for his inquiry and would try to explain, but where in . . . do you come to criticize my affiliations and to tell me how I should serve God? Here we both eat in the same restaurant—which is only kosher *style*; both of us are clean

shaven; our places of business are open on the Sabbath. So where is the difference between you and me?"

"That's nothing!" Tarsky retorted. "I still don't belong to a reform temple."

"As far as this is concerned, in name, it may be reform, but we too have a daily Hebrew school; the chanting on Friday night is traditional. You sit with the women folks also, as we do. So where is the difference?"

"How about your uncovered heads?" Tarsky exclaimed.

To this Barsky answered jokingly, "Well, hats on, hats off. Where is the difference as long as you have your Jewish heart with you? Must we be in the millinery business in shul too?"

At this point their rabbis entered the restaurant together.

To Barsky their appearance was not a surprise. He knew that, being scholars and having much in common, they were very friendly. Tarsky, however, looked at them in opened-eyed amazement.

When Barsky invited the rabbis to join them at their table, one explained that they were just returning from a "good will" meeting, and since they had a few matters to discuss, they would like to be excused.

\* \* \*

It must be said that Tarsky did not enjoy the rest of his dinner. He was disturbed. To him it was a shock to see his rabbi hobnobbing with the rabbi of a reform temple. Barsky noticed this, and in order to distract his friend reminded him not to overlook the gefilte kishkes, which taste best when hot.

Both left the restaurant in silence. Two blocks away they departed.



When Tarsky was a half block away, Barsky called him back.

"I see you are a little disturbed and I want to give you some food for thought. You may feel better when you get home. A few days ago, while on the West Side, as usual, I visited my old pious rebbe. He knows that I am a member of a temple. Yet he never reproached me for that. He was happy to learn that I am active in Jewish life. He reminded me of the prayer: 'Our Father, merciful Father, ever compassionate, have mercy upon us. O put it into our hearts to understand and to discern, to mark, learn, and teach.' You see, friend Tarsky, even my old-time orthodox rebbe tells us to understand. We must have understanding."

\* \* \*

When Tarsky woke in the morning, his wife was still asleep, so he started for the corner restaurant for breakfast.

As he closed the bedroom door his wife awoke. She reminded him sleepily to pick up a few bills on the dresser. One of these was a bill for the annual dues to his congregation.

He murmured, "My money has to go for a guy who hobnobs with a reformer. Let him wait."

### NAOMI'S LIVER TROUBLE

IT WAS nine o'clock in the morning.

Louis Zar, counselor-at-law, was at his desk, and with his usual promptness and care was sorting his morning mail.

Zar was active in a number of Jewish organizations,

and he backed up his activities with generous donations.

The treasurer of a fraternal organization often remarked, "If Zar wants to do some talking, he at least gives a dollar. But I am sick and tired of those lawyers who always want to make speeches and—between you and me—whose hands remain in their pockets."

There was a time when Zar responded to every plea that came in an envelope from the Holy Land.

In days gone by, he would even be touched by a letter from a destitute father:

"Praised be our Father in heaven Who has blessed me with three daughters. The oldest one, Rachel—may she live 120 years—has virtues like our mother Rachel of old. She has now reached the years, thank God, like all other virtuous daughters in Israel—to be married. I, her destitute father who have devoted all my life, day and night, to learn the Torah in this Holy Land, alas, am not able to provide a dowry. So I appeal to your good heart to share with me that great mitzvah of providing the necessary things for the wedding."

People who visited Palestine returned with uncomplimentary information about such "schnorrers." After that Zar disregarded some of that correspondence. About the rest, he consulted the rabbi of his congregation.

Attorney Zar was not in a happy mood this morning. His wife, Naomi, whom he loved and whose companionship he cherished with the utmost tenderness, did not look so well this morning.

Notwithstanding that she had assured him there was nothing the matter with her, he was worried.

Only a couple of years ago she had been a picture of health. Her two dimples never tired his eyes. Although a sensible and practical woman, she followed the advice of her friends and fell victim to the reducing fad. Un-

fortunately, her reducing was not gradual, and she had not been able to come to her own.

Her loyal husband worried about her shrunken body and pale face.

As the days rolled by, he compromised with this situation by asking her not to overwork herself. Since they were not blessed with children, she meant everything to him.

After completing the sorting of his mail and distributing the correspondence to his stenographers, he received a number of clients with whom he was occupied until the lunch hour.

Before going out to lunch, he called up his Naomi to find out how she was feeling.

He was disturbed when she did not answer the telephone with her usual promptness. But he became alarmed when she informed him in a tired voice, "I am feeling fine except that I am having trouble with my liver."

Among his professional friends, Zar had the highest regard for Dr. Julius Simon. He had attended the university with him. After that, they had parted to pursue their studies in their chosen professions. He took up law, and his friend—medicine.

Time and again he suggested to Naomi that she visit Dr. Simon in whom he had so much confidence. Mr. Zar knew his friend to be a good and conscientious medic. But Naomi always followed the advice of her lady friends, who recommended doctors and professors who were measured by the fee they charged their patients.

Dr. Simon was examining a patient when surprised by a call from his old friend, Zar, who told in a troubled voice that he must come at once and examine Naomi.



Naomi was more than surprised when she heard the key in the front door, for she knew it was too early for her Louis to be coming home.

She was shocked when the door opened and her husband came in with their friend, Dr. Simon, carrying his satchel.

"Naomi darling," Zar pleaded, "I never interfered when you consulted other doctors. But it has come to a point where you will have to listen to me and permit our friend Julius to take care of you. I don't like this idea of your liver trouble. I have enough confidence in our friend to know that if he can't detect the symptoms himself, he will be honest enough to recommend a specialist."

"Darling! What are you talking about? The trouble with you is that you don't let anybody explain anything to you over the telephone. Here I wasted two hours in the butcher shop standing in line with dozens of women to get something for supper. All I said over the telephone was that I was having trouble with my liver. I don't know whether to fry it or broil it."

## REACHING THE HEIGHTS

DOUBLED up under the heavy cake of ice carried on his back with the aid of a rusty pair of tongs, Agursky crawled from one floor to another with his melting burden. It was a stove-heated building with a class of Jewish tenants who don't move every Monday and Thursday, as the saying goes.

On each floor he stopped for a while to rest.

As he wiped his brow with a badly soiled handkerchief, he made a mental note of the number of ice boxes in the building which he was to fill. This he did with fear in his heart, for some of his customers might inform him



that they had outfitted their flats with refrigerators and had no further need for ice delivery. Such modern improvements cut into his income.

His customers saw him rarely. He threw his load into the box and disappeared like a spirit.

There was a time when he was known to be a rich man and owner of several properties. He had been a power in the building trade. Architects, plumbing and lumber contractors, would seek his acquaintance. At the Club they would make it their business to find a vacant chair at the table where he was sitting. In conversation, he always raised his voice. When a few intimate friends called his attention to this bad habit and reminded him that it was unbecoming to shout, his answer was, "When I signed my application, I was told that this would be my downtown home—and at home, I do as I please."

He had belonged to many organizations, "just to help out." His contributions were no larger than those of the average donor, but yet when he occasionally appeared at a meeting, he received recognition because of his wealth and prominence in the building trade.

"A smart real estate man," they would say.

He now delivered ice to the same tenants from whom he used to collect rent in those days.

As a landlord, he had developed precious few friendships among his tenants. Yet now they patronized him with great sympathy. Pitying their former landlord, they tried to get new customers for him.

Most of the tenants agreed with Mrs. Krupnick: "After all, as a landlord Agursky was not worse than the rest of them. It is an old story—when you've got 'gelt,' your heart gets hard like gold and silver. But we should warm our hearts and buy ice from him."

He was grateful to them. But he would be more grateful to Mrs. Levit, the redhead, if she would buy no more ice from him and recommend no new customers. For each time she inquired of him whether he still had the summer home in Michigan; if his wife still took the car over to Maxwell St. to buy food for Shabbas; and other questions to bring back memories that weakened his feet under his heavy load.

"Mr. Agursky, I have another good customer for you . . . yes, Mr. Agursky, though you didn't earn it of me that I should get you new customers. I remember how mean you were to me when I asked you to paint my kitchen, when with tears in my eyes I begged of you to furnish me with a new store. After all, my rent was always paid on time, *und vi noch!* But as it is said in the Bible, when your enemy is down, don't rejoice. You are down and out, so one feels bound to help you. Go into Mrs. Berzof across the street; she wants to buy ice."

The name Berzof was not strange to Agursky. As a landlord he had had many arguments with Mrs. Berzof. But what could he do? He had ice to sell.

Berzof lived on the third floor, one might almost say on the fourth. When Agursky built the place, he made the basement very high. The fact is, the high basement had been intended for spacious locker rooms and wash-rooms, but Agursky had managed to "push in" a couple of flats and thereby increase his income. Later on, he had turned one of the "flatlach" into a grocery store for a little more income, though he told everybody it was for the convenience of the tenants.

When he finally reached Berzof's ice box, he was all tired out. The sweat dripped from his brow and his breath came hard.

Mrs. Berzof lifted the cover of the ice box in order to help him, but at the same time she smiled, with a touch of irony.

"Mr. Agursky, had you known that it would be you who must carry the ice, would you have built this building so high from the ground?"

### FISHING FOR TROUBLE

IT WAS early morning and the pale moon could still be seen.

Masha, the wife of Hyman Faiwel, awoke from her sleep when she heard her husband making a noise in their bedroom. Since this was Sunday morning, her first thought was that he was going to take Ginger, their dog, out for an airing. But discovering that the sun had not yet risen, she half-sleepily asked, "Why so early?"

"I am going fishing," he answered, haltingly.

Mrs. Faiwel was aware of the fact that a number of their Jewish neighbors had taken to fishing off the little pier on the lake; but she never expected her Hyman would also join the crowd of fishermen.

She sat up in bed, looked at him in bewilderment, and cried out, "Fishing! Fishing! Look who is going fishing! Never in his life has he held a fishing rod and now when he makes my life bitter with his rheumatism and catches colds every Monday and Thursday, he wants to catch fish. And how about poor Ginger? First you didn't care for him. You always kept on saying that it was against the Bible to have a dog in a Jewish home, and now when you are more chummy with him than you are with me, you are going fishing, and I should now take him out for an airing with my asthma. Nu, isn't that funny?"

It seems that her husband was so used to her argu-

ments that he picked up his cap and the fishing utensils and left the house. Ginger had only time to escort his master to the door, for Faiwel slammed it on him.

At the pier, Hyman Faiwel received a warm welcome from his co-religionists. They were the same people he had met a few years before at the synagogue in the early morning as the first "minyan." These "minyanim" were a great help to some of our brothers who had "yahrzeit." A number of the old settlers were now in the Great Beyond and the few left had taken to fishing.

When the little pier was first completed, many non-Jews would also come there to fish; but now with the increase of the sons of Israel, their number diminished and then they disappeared completely. It became an exclusively Jewish fishing spot.

The first to greet the newcomer was Joe Polansky, who instructed Faiwel: "Remember, Faiwel, fishing is not a poker game. You must have patience—lots more than in a card game. But above all—keep quiet. You will find out what a great pleasure it is when you catch something. Boy! It's a real 'nachas.' "

"Look here," thundered Sam Baron, "you told him to keep quiet and you make all the noise. Just let him alone. He will find his own way. Each one of us ought to learn the trick of catching fish in his own way. Above all, it's also 'mazel' like in everything."

Jack Robin, who knew Faiwel much better than the others, took the newcomer under his direction and showed him how to cast his line and how to attach the bait to the hook. As in many other things, fate was good to beginners and Faiwel made some good catches. When they got up to depart for their homes, he was congratulated for his success.

On their way to their homes, not afraid of scaring away



the fish, they did a lot of talking. Some of the discussion centered around the war, for most of them had sons on all fronts. Some were wondering whether prosperity would continue after the war or they would suffer another depression. Of course, when Jews come together, the subject of the rabbi and his faults is also not neglected. Sometimes, however, one will extol his rabbi above all other spiritual leaders.

For two blocks Faiwel walked home alone. While he was proud of his catch and carried his rod with the same dignity and piety that a Jew displays carrying his "lulav on Succoth," he was somewhat disturbed. He knew his Masha well. He was not certain of the kind of reception he and his fish would receive.

Within a little while his fears were realized. As he came in the house, Masha had already put on her slacks and was doing some work in the kitchen. It was natural for him to surprise her with his accomplishments. As he held out the fish with the hope that Masha would accept them and perhaps have them cooked, she grabbed them from him. First she admonished him, "If you do this again—leave me Sunday morning all alone and no help to me around the house and take Ginger for a walk, you can jump in the lake and keep the fish company."

In great excitement, she threw the fish out the window. The Belgian janitor, who had seen Faiwel come in with the catch and who also knew Mrs. Faiwel and her temperament, realized whence the fish had come.

In the evening when the janitor's wife fried the fish and the savory smell came in through the open windows of the Faiwels, he said, "Couldn't we have enjoyed the fish ourselves?"

She said, "Even the smell of it is too much for you."  
Ginger barked. Was it in agreement?

## A MISUNDERSTOOD GUEST

MOE BIN and his wife Zlatah settled in a small mining town a month after they were married. They were then only six months in this land of promise. Both of them had come from Poland.

A rich uncle of Moe's, who had piled up a big fortune for himself in a small town, then settled in Chicago, and advised his nephew that he and his wife too would have a better future in a small town.

\* \* \*

Moe and his wife were slaves to their dry goods store for a quarter of a century. In addition to this, the problem of rearing their son, Max, and their daughter, Rachel, was not an easy one. The entire population of the mining town was composed of Hungarians, Romanians, and a few Croats.

The Bins, instead of acquiring the English language, were compelled to absorb a few words of the foreign languages spoken by their customers in order to run their business. Of course, when their children started public school, the English language became more familiar in the household.

It must be said here that Bin was rather lax about teaching his children anything about Judaism. This responsibility fell upon the shoulders of the mother, who, in addition to her house responsibilities, was also "chief clerk" in the store.

As the children grew older and the balance in the local bank become larger, she spent many sleepless nights worrying about her children's future and their present surroundings. As self-defense and as an effort to preserve

some semblance of Judaism, she taught her daughter to light the candles on Friday night and instructed her boy Max to recite the "Ha-motsi" at each meal. His Bar Mitzvah was done in a rather haphazard manner. The melamed in the big city received ten dollars to prepare Max. He assured the parents that in the eyes of God all that was necessary was a good heart, and since Max was a good boy, he would be a good Jew.

As the children grew up, Mrs. Bin noticed that her daughter was getting friendly with some of the non-Jewish boys and that her son was more than friendly with one of the non-Jewish girls, the daughter of a Romanian miner, with two big, black eyes—almost looking Jewish.

It was on a Saturday night when the Bins had closed the store and both of them were very tired. Mrs. Bin suddenly approached her husband with a sigh.

"Moe, I believe that we will have to do the same thing that our uncle did—move to a big city. I am scared to death. I am afraid that in our old age, we may have on our hands a shikseh for a daughter-in-law and a shegetz for a son-in-law. Thank God we have enough money for the rest of our lives. We can buy a big flat building with a stone front, and from the income we will have enough to live on."

\* \* \*

A few months later, we see the Bins in Chicago, the owners of a flat in a Jewish neighborhood. Their daughter Rachel, whose education had not gone beyond public school, had a job as sales clerk in a bakery. Her fine physique and rosy cheeks gave appetite to the customers. Their son, Max, with less education, was employed to

wash automobiles in a garage. Having missed a Jewish environment all these years, Bin made up for lost time by visiting a nearby synagogue three times a day. Next to the synagogue in a high basement was the clubroom of a group of Jewish boys who called themselves "The Badgers." Quite often, when the father was on his way to the synagogue on Friday night to receive the "Sabbath princess," he noticed his son entering the Badgers club. However, he did not interfere.

As for Mrs. Bin, who had been satisfied all these years with a gingham dress, she quickly learned the styles in dresses of a big city. Many of her tenants envied her when she came Saturday morning to the "Veibisher Shul," that is, the women's section of the synagogue. Her fingers, which had been toiling for so many years handling overalls, work shirts, and cotton gloves, were now adorned with plenty of rings with big stones.

The Bins were somewhat surprised that their daughter had as yet not made a "catch." Little did they realize that city boys are modern and they do not fall for a girl with physical strength and rosy cheeks. They may admire a girl who is "zaftig," but they will not marry her.

It was, therefore, a pleasant surprise to the Bins, particularly to Mrs. Bin, when Rachel informed them that she would bring a guest, a Jewish professor, for dinner on Friday night.

In the grocery store and in the butcher shop, the happy mother informed all her friends of the distinguished guest who would grace their Friday night table.

Her head was in a turmoil, trying to decide which dress to wear for the occasion. Though her Moe had been visiting the barber every two weeks, she insisted on his attendance at the tonsorial parlor before that lapse of



time, so that he might appear completely presentable.

Rachel herself she was not worried about, for the mother always said, "My daughter—even when she wears rags, her beauty is outstanding."

At the dinner table, the voice of Bin was not again heard after his recitation of the Kiddush. Mrs. Bin felt highly complimented over the hearty appetite of her guest. This meant that her cooking was good. And incidentally, she admired the cleancut appearance of the professor, particularly his sharply-pointed mustache.

Before his coming, mother and daughter had come to an understanding that daughter should not enter the kitchen, to enable her to entertain the guest. But when the last of the dishes had been removed, the voice of Mrs. Bin was heard.

"Rachel, Rachel, I want to see you for a moment. I want to ask you something." When the daughter came into the kitchen, Mrs. Bin spoke rather timidly.

"It isn't often we can have a professor in the house. Now you know how my rheumatism bothers me. Lately I also have a little cough, and once in a while I have a heartburning. Altogether, I am not well. Do you think your professor would like to examine me?"

The sudden laughter of Rachel almost made the walls tremble.

... "I am sick and she laughs!" cried Mrs. Bin, in indignation.

"But, Ma," the girl was finally able to explain, in her customary healthy, heavy voice, "what are you talking about? He can't do anything for you! He's my dancing professor!"

## SHE MADE IT

IT was late in the afternoon when Minnie Belsk, sitting at the window of her second floor apartment, noticed her husband down the street coming home.

This was not his usual hour of return from business.

She knew why he had no patience to remain at his business establishment. She realized that he, too, was lonesome.

Their daughter Zerlina (named after her grandfather Zalman), had kissed them goodby a few weeks ago.

She had gone to study at an out-of-town university. Since then, silence had prevailed in their home. While Zerlina was at home, there was a steady stream of young people coming and going and their laughter and merriment filled the house. Mrs. Belsk also filled the ice box with goodies for her daughter's friends.

When Zerlina graduated from high school and informed her parents that she was planning to go out of town to continue her studies, her mother could not understand what prompted Zerlina to make this decision, since there were several universities in their own city.

Minnie was worried.

In the butcher shop, Mrs. Belsk listened almost every morning to women of her own station discussing letters that they had received from their sons and daughters attending an out-of-town university. This fact minimized her worry about her daughter's desire to do likewise.

Mrs. Belsk particularly remembered one morning when Mrs. Shapiro, coming into the butcher shop, greeted Mrs. Levy with pride and excitement.

"I have good news from my daughter, Loretta. SHE MADE IT!"

Mrs. Belsk thought that Loretta had MADE herself a dress or a hat. However, she soon learned that "SHE MADE IT" indicated acceptance into a sorority.

She was told of the great hardships one had to go through before being accepted in a sorority, and what a great honor it was to be known as a member of such an organization.

Each time Mrs. Belsk passed by the bedroom of her daughter, her depression increased. The bed in which Zerlina had slept since childhood and the absence of books on the dresser, brought tears to her eyes. At such times she could almost hear the voice of her sister, Rebecca, who had pleaded with her.

"Zerlina is your only child. Why do you let her go out of town? She will be away from home enough when she gets married."

To this Mrs. Belsk always answered mechanically.

"Well, they all say it is good for a girl to be away for a while and to be on her own."

\* \* \*

Mrs. Minnie Belsk rushed into the washroom to fix her face a little before pushing the button to let her husband in.

As he came in, he looked at his wife gloomily.

"Ah, Minnie, you have been crying. . . . Your eyes are red."

"Joe, what makes you think so! There is nothing to cry about. The letters we receive from Zerlina are really nice and I understand that very soon she is going to make it."

"Make it?" Joseph Belsk inquired with alarm. "Make it? What is it? Is she going to make a shidduch?"

"No, no, Joseph, who is talking about a shidduch? She is too young for that. It means that she is going to belong to a—ah—ah—well, I really don't know how they call it—let me see, I think they call it a sohority or a surety. It means—ah—ah—a club of girls where only the best are taken in."

"Ah, I see," Joseph Belsk returned. He sat down and directed his eyes toward Zerlina's bedroom. . . .

After a while, he addressed his wife reproachfully.

"If you, Minnie, hadn't listened to Zerlina she would be home and attending a university right here in town. But you kept on saying all the time that she should be on her own. I can't understand the meaning of being on her own, since I have to mail her checks all the time. I remember when I was on my own in the yeshivah. All I had to sleep on were hard benches. I had my meals in a different home every day. That meant something. But here I mail her additional checks even for dresses and what not. Oi! Oi! Minnie, here you keep on crying day and night and I have no patience to take care of our little business, because I am just sick and lonesome. After all, she is our only child."

The Belskes carried on the conversation about Zerlina for quite a while when the telephone rang.

"Ah," Belsk remarked, "somebody is calling from the store."

But it was a long distance call from out of town. Zerlina was calling.

"Hello, Pa. Where is Ma?"

"Near me," the excited father answered.

"Ask Zerlina if SHE MADE IT," the mother said anxiously.

"Huh?" the father asked, straining himself to hear. . . .



He placed the telephone in its place and smilingly informed his wife:

"Yes, SHE MADE IT. Zerlina made up her mind to come home."

### A HEART-CHORD IS TOUCHED

"I PLEADED WITH you as I would with a murderer that you shouldn't bring your father to America," exclaimed Mrs. Dora Levine accusingly, as her husband Jacob entered the house.

"I know of many other children who placed their parents in Old Peoples' homes or rented rooms for them, only you—you—insist that I shall be burdened with your father."

"Dora!" he pleaded, "let me rest at least the little while I spend at home."

"I can no longer stand your old man with his old country ways. There must be an end to it."

In the rocking chair she swayed nervously. He strode back and forth across the room, wrought up and biting his lips. Suddenly he stopped.

"Dora!"

"What do you want?"

"He is my father. He suffered and struggled all his life. I remember even with his meager income he always helped other people. I don't have to tell you of his fine character and piety. I am sure when he goes in the synagogue he also prays for your health and well being. He has devoted his whole life to me. Many nights' sleep he lost on my account. My mother has long been dead. He is all alone—neglected—I—"

"What! What!" she burst out. "Maybe you'll say that you too are neglected? Well, if you don't feel right living

with me, if you feel that you are being neglected, you may go with your father wherever you will. I'll manage to go on with life without both of you. My hair, after all, is not all gray—if there are a few of them, it is due to your father's presence in the house."

"Who is making insinuations? You know yourself that I would do anything in the world for you. I will make all sacrifices. You should know, however, and never forget that he is my father."

"I know, I know," she shook her head and continued rocking with even greater impetus. "I know that your father is more important to you than I am."

He again paced back and forth over the floor.

"Dora!"

"What, what is it now?"

"Tell me, if you please, how long is it since your father (may he rest in peace) died?"

Her hands loosed their hold on the rocking chair. She lifted her head and gazed directly into his eyes.

"Almost five years," she sighed.

"Do you remember," he asked, "that dark night when I ran eight miles to find a doctor for your father? It was stormy and snowing and I ran on—all out of breath. I had only one wish and desire, and that was to get medical aid for your father. Do you remember how I caught cold that night, and was laid up in bed for two weeks' time? And if it had been two years, it wouldn't have mattered, just so your father's life might be saved!"

There were tears in her eyes.

"Well, what good will crying do?" he remarked. "You won't lift him out of the grave with your tears. Let us rather do something for the living ones. Come, give me supper, I must do a couple hours' work yet tonight."

"Aren't you going to wait for your father?"

"I don't know. I can't tell when he will return from the synagogue."

"He ate very little dinner today," said she, with a touch of sympathy and regret.

\* \* \*

While she was putting the meat on the table the old man came in.

"Father," she asked, "so late and still not hungry?"

"Oh, why worry?" the old man replied.

"Father," says the son, "our landsman Levy asked me why you never call on him. As a matter of fact, our landsleit are beginning to think you are neglecting them. You know that they respect you here the same as they did in the old country. If you want to, I'll take you there on my way to work."

"As you say, so let it be," the old man nodded his assent.

"Take my advice," interposed the daughter-in-law. "It is very cold today. Better remain at home. Your landsman will not run away. Better remain at home and I'll make some fresh tea for you."

The old man looked at his daughter-in-law with wide open eyes.

Tears shone in the eyes of his son.

## REMOVABLE PAINT

HYMAN ROBBIN, instead of having a feeling that the woolen stocking which his wife brought to his bed early in the morning would give him comfort and warmth, got a terrible shock. His body was chilled all the way through. Something that he never expected happened. While his

Minnie handed him the stockings, he noticed that her finger nails were painted.

He was always proud to boast that his Minnie did not belong to the majority of women whose religion was, "Everybody's doing it."

His Minnie always respected his views on painted nails, rouged lips, and other cosmetic devices, used by Eve's daughters.

Hyman was not what you would call a cultured or educated man, but he was sensible. He had a natural understanding of rhythm and beauty. Time and again he repeated to Minnie, "It hurts me when I see a woman with two charming dimples at the corners of her mouth which could attract even a blind man—and they smear them over with red paint and their natural beauty is gone. By golly, if the law would permit me, I would carry a sponge and a pail of water and wash off their lips."

Minnie would listen to him and smile.

"As for painted nails," he would say, "my appetite is almost gone when a waitress in a restaurant hands over food with painted nails. It seems to me like the legs of an ostrich stepping on my food."

And now his own Minnie had betrayed his confidence in her. He left the house in anger without having breakfast. He heard her calling him, "Hyman, Hyman, come back. Have your breakfast!"

But he slammed the door and was gone. . . .

Hyman was restless the whole day. He could not attend to his business. It must be said that he had the highest regard for his Minnie. She telephoned a few times, but he played the part of a stubborn man and refused to answer. As a matter of fact he instructed his



stenographer to inform his wife that he was not coming for supper. . . .

The same day when he came to his usual restaurant and the same waitress served him, he had the time of his life controlling his anger when he noticed her painted nails. He did not eat much. The few fellows who dined with him at the same table every day noticed that he was depressed.

When one of them inquired why he was so nervous he replied, "Is there any wonder why one in these days is always upset? Merchandise is hard to get, customers tear you to pieces, and there is no end to these terrible shortages. And boys, between you and me—and, please, I want you to believe me—I feel quite often that the few dollars made today is not so yi-yi-yi."

When he came back to his office, he found another call from his Minnie and again he did not reply. While he very often had supper at his club and relished the marinated fish with Spanish onions, this time he ate it automatically as he thought of Minnie. . . .

It was very late when he quietly opened the door of his home and entered the front room. The room was dark except for one shaded lamp.

Nearby Minnie was sitting, asleep, her head resting on her chest, with her hands holding the arms of the chair. He could see that the nails of his Minnie's hands were natural again. The paint was gone. . . .

Quietly he sat in a chair and looked at her. . . .

Memories of old came to him. They reminded him of the days when he married his Minnie in Slobodka. They came over six months later, and both went through the trying immigrant days. There were years of plenty and days when many things were missing, but she always

encouraged him, helped him, and worked with him to carry on.

The family they had raised were admired by all their friends and neighbors. Their two married daughters lived out of town and they found happiness in the thought that their daughters were occupying fine positions in their communities. Their only son was now in an out-of-town college studying medicine, and when Hyman now and then began to lament their lonesomeness Minnie would cheer him up.

"Remember, Hyman, we are not the only ones—there are thousands of fathers and mothers whose children are away from home. Let us be grateful to God for the cheerful letters we receive from them and let us hope and pray that they will all be well for many years to come."

A few times he made the attempt to walk over to his wife, but something held him back. It seemed that he found comfort in her restful position. True, her face expressed sorrow. Nevertheless she was relaxed, and that pleased him. . . .

At the moment when she sighed in her sleep, he pulled himself together and started toward her. She, sensing his steps, woke up.

As he placed his hands on her shoulders, she smiled.

For a moment he looked at her, and then said, "Minnie, I never knew that painted nails can be washed off too! Why, this is something new to me! I don't see any reason why you should be different from other women."

The only lamp was turned off and in the darkness of the house two depressed souls were bright again.

## A MOTHER'S VACATION

EACH time that Mrs. Brody feels her cough choking her, she runs out into the kitchen, and if her daughter Lena is in the kitchen, she runs into the front room.

The cough, which stifles her, she wishes to keep from everyone, particularly from Lena, because today Lena leaves for her vacation.

Now Mrs. Brody has waited all these days, weeks, months, yes, hours, to see Lena preparing and "buying little things" before going to the country—Lena works so hard.

Lena means everything to her. Mr. Brody went to his everlasting sleep about three years ago in the Lupmansker Cemetery. The Society of his landsleit owned the cemetery. Brody had given all his time, and one might say, all his life, to this resting place.

Often Mrs. Brody would say, "Nu, if I would have mazel, my good husband, may he rest in peace, would not have gone all the time to his meetings. Instead he would have taken care of the boys who are now all over the country like rolling stones, and he would have taken care of me and Lena, who are alone. Each time she brings me her check I feel knives cutting all over my body. Poor Lena had no mazel, not even to finish high school. Just two years at a business school, and after—work, work, and work."

"Lena, darling," she says, "you know, I met Mrs. Pimpuk, the shoemaker's wife, today. I met her in the butcher shop. She tells me that her daughter works with you in the same office. Her daughter says that you are the best stenographer. Everybody there likes you."

To this Lena answers with a touch of irony, patting

her mother's shoulder. "I suppose this is the reason I work overtime so often correcting other people's mistakes."

\* \* \*

Lena does not want to go on a vacation this summer. She wants her mother to inhale a little country air, since there is not enough money for both to go. Her mother looks bad—she coughs.

"Go, you little fool," the mother pleads. "You work so hard all year. You must have a vacation. As for me, my bit of a cough. It shouldn't bother you. Just a little cold. I'll get over it."

"But you look so weak, Mother. Under your eyes there are black rings," Lena insists.

"What rings? Where do you see rings? Rings! May the truly fated one come soon with a ring for your finger. . . . In the meantime go on your vacation and gain some strength. I am all right."

Lena is not convinced, so Mrs. Brody continues. "And suppose I do cough a little . . . nu . . . so babies cough too. The milk and honey I get nowadays helps a lot, danken Gott. And believe me, every minute you spend in the country will be like a year of joy for me. Who can tell . . . you may meet your mazel there. If mazel doesn't show up one time, with God's help it comes the next. My mother, may she rest in peace, always used to say, 'Good luck is a teaser.'"

"Mamma dear," Lena pleads, "I will borrow a few dollars and we will both go. Yes mother, both of us, and we will have a good time."

"Oh, no, daughter dear! Borrow money for pleasure? Your mother doesn't go to the country on other people's money. I am not a society lady, I am not, danken



Gott, one of those who order packages shipped out from the grocery every week and return to the city after the vacation is over to find that the grocery man is bankrupt because the pleasurnikes did not pay for what they ate and drank and entertained company."

"Then I have another plan," Lena says, feeling sure that her mother will agree. "My boss allows me a week vacation. So I'll stay in the country for three days, and you go out there for the remaining four."

"With God there remains yet many days. Another time, not now," replies Mrs. Brody hastily, running to the kitchen, for she feels her cough commencing to choke her again.

The daughter has little choice. The open fields, the clean water of the country draw her like a powerful magnet. But she knows that she will not enjoy it if her mother is not there to share it.

Last summer, in the country, she made the acquaintance of a new friend. She saw him quite often after that until he passed out of her life. Perhaps this year she will meet him again.

Is it possible she did not encourage him enough? Is it because she always spoke of her responsibility to her mother? Perhaps this year she will meet him again. . . .

\* \* \*

That same afternoon Lena kisses her mother goodbye, and before Lena has entered the train for the trip to the country her mother is already breathing easier. . . . She returns home highly contented.

For now she may cough freely. . . .

## FOUND AND LOST

MR. AND MRS. JACOB ZOLSKY returned this morning from their summer cottage in a nearby Wisconsin resort.

While they did not have much to unpack, nevertheless they were busy putting wearing apparel and other items away in the right places.

"I must say," Mrs. Zolsky addressed her husband in a satisfied tone, "that you put it over in a nice way. This was the first year that I realized what it means to have a rest."

Her husband grinned:

"Well, something had to be done to keep the mob away from our cottage."

"You did it in such a way that one in a million would not have thought about it, and it worked."

\* \* \*

The story behind their conversation is this.

The Zolskys are popular in the neighborhood where they reside. They are known for their kindness and for their cooperation with all those who need help.

While they appreciated such recognition and popularity when in town, they paid the penalty while summering in their country cottage.

Most of the week, Jacob Zolsky stayed in town attending to his business, but he never failed to join his wife and their three children for weekends.

But alas, instead of having a rest and enjoying a few days with his family, he had to assume the responsibility of helping his wife take care of the uninvited guests who "dropped in." The funniest thing was that most of them managed to "drop in" at the lunch hour or at supper time.

True, Mrs. Zolsky tried her best to hire help. But because of the labor shortage, she and her husband had to do all the serving themselves.

Time and again, Mrs. Zolsky expressed her disappointment to her husband.

"If some of the women would pitch in and help a little, it would not be so hard. But they fall upon us like locusts, and what can you do?"

Of course, they had to tolerate their relatives and did not mind showing hospitality to some of their customers, but they could not understand why they had to be troubled by the butcher from whom they bought meat or by the cobbler who repaired their shoes!

Even those who were not invited to eat naturally had to be treated with a glass of orange juice. This, too, required work, particularly when the oranges these days have such thick skins and so very little juice.

As a matter of fact, one Sunday, some of the uninvited guests kept talking about the cloudy sky and the threatening weather. They decided that in the event of rain they would be more than willing to spend the night with the Zolskys and leave for town early in the morning.

The cobbler's wife pointed out that her red-headed Jacky could sleep in the front porch and she and her husband would not mind occupying the rear porch.

Fortunately, a miracle happened. The skies cleared and there was not a sign of rain, and the cobbler's family, as well as the others, departed.

The tired host, part jokingly and part bitterly, remarked to his wife, "My father, *alav ha-shalom*, used to go out under the canopy of heaven and thank God for the new moon every month. I would like to go out now

and offer a prayer to God for clearing the sky and for holding the drops of rain within the clouds."

\* \* \*

There had been great doubt in the minds of the Zolsky family whether or not they should occupy their summer cottage at all this year. The year previous, there had been a larger influx of guests than ever before. It seemed that the news of their hospitality was well circulated in the city.

Zolsky, as one would say, took the bull by the horns, and settled the problem in the most practical manner.

He made up a list of all their friends and even a few of their relations, to whom he sent letters just before the summer season asking whether they could let him have a personal loan of a thousand dollars for a period of sixty days.

The majority replied with all kinds of excuses, principally that they, too, had obligations to meet, and they could not respond to his request.

Some of them ignored his letter entirely.

But the fact remained that none of them utilized the hospitality of Zolsky's cottage.

\* \* \*

Next morning when Zolsky called his wife from his business place, she at once detected a note of melancholy in his voice.

When she inquired the reason, he replied bitterly,

"Nu, I surely made a fool of myself. Some wholesale houses refuse to give me credit because they heard I was asking for loans."



## OH! DID HE LEARN!

TODAY Rabbi Alfred Wunderbar is known as one of the best preachers in this country.

Demands for speaking engagements come to him from every part of the United States; and quite often Canadian Jewry also invites him. Of course, there is one city in Canada where he does not feel comfortable—Montreal. The gloomy faces of the French element do not fit in with his “*gemutlichkeit*.”

When he arrived from Germany after the last war he brought with him the power of oratory and the ability of preaching effectively. It was, however, very, very hard for him to fit in in any congregation. While he considered himself orthodox and his face was ornamented with a beautiful beard, *unzere yiden* could not digest his German language. Of course, in the modern congregations he could not supply spiritual food, since he did not possess the English language.

It must be said, however, that it did not take long for him to endear himself to the rabbis of all the various wings—orthodox, conservative, and reform. He could please the orthodox rabbis with his deep knowledge of the Talmud. The conservative and reform rabbis appreciated his modern approach to Judaism.

With much pressure, here and there, he at last succeeded in being placed in a congregation to which no label could be attached. Although it had been founded by our orthodox brethren, the orthodox sisters had deserted the “*veibershe shul*” and placed themselves downstairs together with the men.

The membership of the congregation was a mixture of Hungarian and Galician Jews who somehow tolerated Rabbi Wunderbar's German. For the Litvaks it was like cracking nuts with false teeth. These Litvaks were at times very rude to Rabbi Wunderbar. Quite often, before he was about to deliver his sermon, they would leave the synagogue and be found outside on the sidewalk discussing real estate, stocks, and bonds.

To Rabbi Wunderbar this was a painful and humiliating experience. But he was kind enough not to condemn all the Litvaks, because a few of them joined him every afternoon in a class in Talmud. These were elderly men—some retired businessmen and some supported by their children. They enjoyed the explanations and interpretations of the German rabbi as he dwelt in the depths of Jewish lore.

Zalman Kalvin, one of the members of the Talmud class, a retired merchant and a scholar from "home," once remarked on this phenomenon.

"Let me tell you, people, that Rabbi Wunderbar is a wonder. If it were not for that anti-Semitic language he uses and if he wouldn't count the hairs in his beard with his fingers all the time, he would make an outstanding orthodox rabbi."

To this Benjamin Lisk replied.

"To be honest with you, I never realized that from Germany could come a man with so much Torah. Oy, if he would only talk to us in a good Yiddish. Sometimes, I don't understand what he says, but ah, to look into his eyes. . . ."

\* \* \*

The difficulties with which Rabbi Wunderbar was confronted were known to his rabbinical colleagues. The

more he endeared himself to them, the more they became concerned with his future. They fully realized that he must acquire the English language. Some of them advised him to attend a public school. Others suggested that he attend night school. And some of them urged him to get a private teacher. To all this, Rabbi Wunderbar answered with confidence and assurance.

"Leave it to me, friends. With *geduld* I will get there."

\* \* \*

On a certain morning Rabbi Wunderbar called up one of his local colleagues regarding a newly published Hebrew book.

"Good morning unto thee. I say unto thee how art thou."

"What's that?" the rabbi on the other end inquired. "Who is talking?"

"It is I," Rabbi Wunderbar replied. "It came to pass that I shall raise my voice only in the English tongue."

"By the way, Rabbi Wunderbar, what system are you using to acquire the language of the land?"

"It is upon the advice of the Eternal, may He be blessed. I used the Holy Book and the dictionary."

"No, no, no!" protested the rabbi on the other end. "You can't use the biblical language in everyday life. You must listen to the children on the street; to the butcher who delivers the meat; to the milkman who brings the milk. In this way you will pick up the language."

Six months later Rabbi Wunderbar, while visiting a Jewish book store, again met the same rabbi, whom he greeted in this manner.

"Say, doc, I met the other day that guy Rabbi Pontz. Gee whiz, oh boy, that guy knows his onions!"

## THE SECRETARY FORGOT!

THIS was not the first time that Hyman Barkan, the well known merchant tailor in the Jewish neighborhood, was on his way to the home of the rabbi with a new garment.

Barkan always prided himself as a professional tailor from the old country. He came to America as a middle aged man. Instead of getting lost in a large clothing factory he opened a small store where he put out a sign with red letters on a white background which read as follows:

"All kinds of tailoring, good work and reasonable. Hyman Barkan, a tailor from the old country."

The announcement on the sign, "All kinds," attracted all sorts of customers. Most of them were women from the middle class, and working men. They began by bringing in all kinds of alterations. Later Barkan also made new clothes for them, particularly for the older generation. He always said, "I am a haimeshe schneider for haimeshe menshen."

Meaning that he was a tailor from the old country for old country folks.

Of course it was a great honor and distinction for him when the rabbi of his congregation a few years before had ordered an overcoat for the winter.

The rabbi too at that time was a middle-aged man. It was not necessary for him to remind Barkan that his warm coat should not be sewed on the Sabbath, for the rabbi knew that Barkan was a God-fearing man and he kept his shop closed on the Sabbath.

However he emphasized strongly that Barkan should be watchful and careful not to put *shaatnez* in the coat.



This meant that since the material for the coat was woolen there should not be any linen in the trimmings.

As for *shaatnez* Hyman Barkan kept his word, but he rather stumbled as regards the Sabbath day.

True the tailor shop was closed on Saturday, but something compelled him in a secret manner to take a street car for downtown. It was a convenient day for him to visit wholesale woolen houses where he could pick up remnants. There were also trimming houses and button manufacturers where he could pick up odd lots at the end of the week.

In the beginning Barkan would make his visits to town in the afternoons, because on Sabbath morning he went to shul and afterwards enjoyed a delicious *chalent*, which was made by his efficient wife, Rivka, in the "haimeshe" style. Sometimes he took a nap afterwards, but he discovered when he came down in the afternoon all the bargains had been picked up by other tailors, so on the advice of Satan he started to make his trips early Saturday mornings.

The rabbi of his synagogue never asked explanations for his absence from shul on Saturday mornings. To some of the members who pressed him for an explanation he would say, "I had an awful hard Friday. Everybody wants their garment for Sabbath so I could not get up in the morning on account of a terrible headache."

\* \* \*

Now Barkan walked briskly carrying a new garment for the rabbi. As a matter of fact it had been finished a week before but the rabbi requested that it be delivered today, Tuesday. Barkan knew from long experience why the rabbi, who had aged very much, wanted to wait a whole week for the coat. His rabbi, to whom he had

become more and more attached as the years went by, would not put any clothes on himself unless paid for. More than once did he hear the rabbi say, "We must not enjoy the labor of others unless it is paid for."

To this Barkan always said, "Nobody knows the piety of our rabbi. I agree that he is not as well known as some other rabbis, because he devotes his time to the study of the Torah. I am telling you, whenever you come to his house, day or night, he has his face in the Book. I am telling you that a rabbi and a tailor from the old country cannot be beat."

Barkan was in hopes that the rabbi had the money to pay by this Tuesday and that he should wear it "gezundheit."

Barkan had never studied psychology. His entire life he had studied pieces of wool, trimmings, and buttons. His understanding of human souls was rather limited. Yet when the rabbi greeted him with a melancholy expression Barkan knew the reason. . . .

For the moment he was lost, but he gathered courage and called out, "Rabbi, let me show you that my tailoring is like old wine. The older I get the better is my work. I tell you that the young tailors torture their customers with measurements, fittings, and what not. I need all those things for *kapparos*. Well, rabbi, let me put your new garment on you. I tell you that you will see what a fine job I made. Please let me . . ."

When on the saintly face of the rabbi there appeared a forced smile Barkan lost heart . . .

"Please, rabbi," Barkan pleaded with deep emotion, "I'll tell you. Let me see how the coat looks on you."

"My dear Barkan," entreated the rabbi, "I can hardly explain to you my regret that I asked you to bring my coat today. It was my great hope that I should be able

to pay for it today. I expected to receive a check from my congregation, but unfortunately it has been delayed. You understand, my friend, that I have no complaint to make. These are hard times and we all go through trials and tribulations. May the Father of Mercy help us all. I am sure . . ."

For a moment Barkan forgot the reverence and respect with which he regarded the rabbi and interrupted him demandingly.

"May you live long, rabbi, won't you at least let me put the coat on you? For all my labor and toil day by day won't you give me a chance to enjoy my tailoring? You will see that even the rebbetzin will admit that notwithstanding the fact that I am so many years in this country I am still an old country tailor."

Barkan had brought in the name of the rebbetzin, seeing her approach from the kitchen. She greeted him pleasantly.

"How are you, Mr. Barkan? Oh, I see you came with my husband's coat."

"Yes," answered Barkan with a sigh, "but the rabbi, may he live long, will not give me the pleasure to see how it looks on him."

The rebbetzin was silent. . . . She knew her husband, the rabbi. . . . She also knew her own situation. She too was waiting for that check which was to have arrived today. The needs were great. While the grocer and the butcher were kind to her she felt that she could not impose upon them. . . .

"Rebbetzin," called Barkan with excitement, "you too are against me. Won't you help me to see that the rabbi tries on his new coat?"

The telephone rang and the rebbetzin picked up the

receiver. From the expression on her face the rabbi and Barkan knew that she had good news. She explained.

"This is a telephone call from the financial secretary of our synagogue. He told me that he was out of town for a few days and he forgot to mail our check before he left, but he is on the way now with it. May God bless him."

As the rabbi rose from his chair with dignity and satisfaction Barkan approached him with the new garment.

### TAKING INVENTORY

"AH, HAH!" exclaimed Hyman Skoopinsky as he entered the street car, noticing Mrs. Abe Abramson, the wife of a wholesaler.

As a matter of fact, Hyman Skoopinsky did business with Abramson, but he wanted to see Mrs. Abramson, who was also active in her husband's business, about something that had nothing to do with merchandise.

Fortunately, there was an empty seat near her. Skoopinsky approached Mrs. Abramson in a rather indignant manner.

"Mrs. Abramson, I was more than surprised not to see you and your husband last Friday night in our congregation when the plaque was dedicated in honor of the boys of our members who are now in the service."

She replied in an indifferent way.

"I am sorry we couldn't be there, but we were taking inventory on Friday night."

"Inventory on Friday night! In the name of God, you have committed two crimes; you desecrated the Sabbath and you disregarded such a solemn duty to participate in an affair where your own son was honored."



"Well," she began to explain, "thank God we receive nice letters from him. He is, baruch ha-Shem, alive, and we hope he will come back. We thought that they were honoring only those who were killed in the service."

"But," argued Skoopinsky, "why didn't you take inventory on Saturday night?"

For a moment she hesitated. "You see, we couldn't do it on Saturday night because we were invited to attend a party given by one of our best customers for his girl on her sixteenth birthday."

Skoopinsky was furious. He tried his best to control himself.

After a few moments of silence he spoke.

"Mrs. Abramson, I can't understand some people. In these tragic days when the flower of our country, our sons and daughters, are spread all over the world to fight for our liberty and our freedom, and when by the thousands they are giving their lives to crush the murderers who undertook to enslave all humanity, people have nothing else to do but to celebrate and give lavish and expensive parties for a girl who reaches the age of sixteen."

"Well," stammered Mrs. Abramson, taken aback by this unexpected flood of oratory, "it's their child and its their privilege to make her happy."

Skoopinsky noticed that the other passengers in the car were casting glances in his direction attracted by his angered tone. He lowered his voice.

"Yes, they make her happy now, but they are creating unhappiness for her in the future, because by giving her such a celebration they give her a feeling of self-importance. She will become a dominating character and as such she will always be unhappy. I am sorry for them, and for her."

Mrs. Abramson, disturbed by the entire affair, broke in, "You know why I am traveling today with the street car? You see, our automobile broke down and the mechanic cannot get parts to fix it, so I am compelled to travel with the street car and please remember I am not used to it. It's very hard."

"Nunu, your father and mother, whom I knew well, travelled all their lives on the street car and there was nothing wrong with them."

They finally reached downtown and Mrs. Abramson got off a few blocks before. Her customer had a chance to watch her crossing the street and what he had in his mind we shall not repeat here.

When Mrs. Abramson came into her business place her husband was occupied in replacing boxes on the shelves, and it seemed that he had just waited for her to pour out his anger. "Here I am; all my life I worked to build up my business, and now it has come to such a point that I have to do this work, cleaning and dusting boxes. By the way, did you get a letter from Sammy?"

"No letter from Sammy this morning," she replied in a depressed tone, "but I had enough on the street car coming down here."

"What happened?"

"Well, I met our customer, Hyman Skoopinsky, and he was very angry because you and I weren't at the congregation when they dedicated a plaque to the boys in the service, in which the name of our Sammy was also included."

Her husband did not answer. It seemed that something was disturbing him. It was his wife who had insisted that they take inventory instead of going to this important occasion when their own son was honored. While inwardly he felt sorry, he did not want to show

his feelings to his wife, who was a great help to him in the business.

"By the way," he said, "I received some merchandise this morning from New York with which we can please a number of our customers. The demand for it is so great, that I don't know whom to please first. What do you say?"

She recommended a few names to her husband, among which Skoopinsky was included. Seeing that her husband was surprised that she recommended Skoopinsky, she explained.

"Of course, he had no right to tell me what he did, for after all it's none of his business, but we must agree that he is a good payer. So I am going to call him up and tell him that we have something for him."

"O.K. with me," her husband agreed.

From back in the store where the office was located, Abramson heard his wife telephoning several customers. However, after a while he noticed that there was no sound coming from the back, so he rushed in to investigate.

He found his wife sitting at her desk, displaying anger the like of which he had never seen before.

"What do you think of that," she broke almost into a sob; "when I called Skoopinsky to tell him about the stuff we have for him, he had the nerve to say, 'I, too, am taking inventory with whom to do business and with whom not to do business.'"

### . . . AND LEBEDOVSKY DECIDES

JACOB LEBEDOVSKY sits in front of his "three story brick building, stone front" and sweats. Between his fingers he

playfully rolls a twenty dollar check made out to Dr. Gingham, in payment for professional service.

He has to take the check to the doctor who lives several blocks away, but it is time now for the evening prayer service. With Lebedovsky, the evening prayer service is a daily social event. He meets in the synagogue others of his class, men like himself who also own "three story brick buildings, stone front."

After the services they sit around and gossip about real estate, which has jumped in price on account of the war, and discuss many other timely subjects.

Of course, criticism of rabbis is a most welcome subject with this group. Most of them contend that the rabbis get their salaries for nothing.

Only yesterday they had a heated discussion on the same matter. To the rabbis' defense came Samuel Harris, a merchant all these years, who, nevertheless has made time for reading and study. Since retiring, he devotes many additional hours to Jewish learning.

He said, "As for our orthodox rabbis, please don't blame them. It is the fault of our congregations, because they don't provide a decent livelihood for them. Hence the rabbis are up against it.

"As for the modern rabbis," Harris continued, "let me tell you that none of you know how hard they work. You have an idea that all they do is to deliver a sermon on Friday nights, eh. Es hebt sich nit an (nothing doing). They visit their members when they are sick, and they are concerned with the troubles and problems of the temple families. My daughter, Minnie, who belongs to a reform temple, tells me that a certain woman made her husband resign from the congregation, because the rabbi didn't call on her when she had a cold, notwithstanding the fact



that she went downtown that very day to do her shopping."

\* \* \*

The question then is, why doesn't Lebedovsky send the check to the doctor by mail? And the answer is: because he wants to see the doctor in person. Doctor Gingham is not of the kind of doctors "you buy three for a nickel"; he is a regular doctor . . . just like the European doctors. He is a Jew, but speaks English only. He doesn't mix in community affairs. When he comes to a patient he doesn't become a good fellow, or intimate with the whole family. He is brief and to the point, and Lebedovsky has the highest respect for him simply because he doesn't speak Yiddish.

In old Russia, or Romania, a doctor or a lawyer would never think of exchanging a word with a plain everyday Jew. For a doctor, one had to doff his hat, and in general what worth did a common Jew have in the eyes of such great people?

Lebedovsky is still impressed after his visit last week to his Irish lawyer, who repeated many times that the Jewish people are the greatest in the world. And showering more compliments, he ended by saying that "the Jewish people must be admired because they stick together."

Lebedovsky decides that tomorrow morning he will take the check to Dr. Gingham. Now he will go to the evening services.

\* \* \*

"Supporter of the fallen and healer of the sick!" The words ring out in a deep, heartfelt, moving tone, as Lebedovsky enters the synagogue.

Lebedovsky is acquainted with the voice of each frequenter of his synagogue. He can, indeed, differentiate

between the enunciation of Mr. Berkovitz and Mr. Auerbach, though they are both from Galicia.

"King who brings death and life!" The words float through the synagogue and the small crowd of daily worshipers stand motionless. Lebedovsky has for a long, long time not heard such a sweet and pious voice, and so correct and charming an enunciation. He seeks to catch the attention of a fellow worshiper in order to share with him his spiritual pleasure, but the eyes of everyone are turned to the altar where the leader of the service stands.

"Who is it that is leading the service?" Lebedovsky asks the shamash when the worshipers sit down.

"A familiar face, but I don't know who he is," answers the shamash. "He came and said he had *yahrzeit* after his father and asked also to lead the service."

"A fine reader," says Lebedovsky with the expression of one tasting a delicious food.

"Each word falls from his mouth like a pearl," agrees the shamash. "Let's just see how much he is going to give for the congregation and how he will treat me. . . ."

"Who sends peace from above," the leader of the service completes the final prayer, and as he turns around Lebedovsky recognizes who it is. For a moment he doubts his own eyes, but as he comes closer he realizes for certain that it is Doctor Gingham who stands before him—his doctor for whom he has a check, the doctor who doesn't speak a word of Yiddish and leads in prayer so wonderfully.

\* \* \*

The services are over. Doctor Gingham slips a dollar bill into the hand of the shamash and starts for the door.

"Hello, Mr. Doctor," Lebedovsky greets him with a shrewd smile. "As I live, I would never have believed that you were such a good reader of Hebrew—like a real trained leader of service, a regular *chazan*."

Lebedovsky reminds himself of the check he has to give the doctor. He muses: Since Dr. Gingham is just one of us, a Jew of Jews, then twenty dollars is too much for him. A Jew that knows Hebrew so well has a sense of justice. He will stand for a little bargaining—and besides he can wait a while.

### BROTHER IKE PLAYS HIS CARD

BENJAMIN BANK finishes his supper and paces back and forth across the room like a tiger in a cage. He is restless. He just cannot stand still. It is almost a week since he has had a card in his hand and for a cardster like Bank that is a long time.

Only the Lord on high knows how much longer it will be before he can get into a good game.

He rings up all his old cronies and for the tenth time invites them over for a card game, but for a variety of reasons not one is available. This one has a cold, that one's wife is ill, another has to meet his mother-in-law at the train.

Deep in his heart Bank feels that they are only making excuses for not coming over. His wife has told him time and again that he gets too excited when he plays cards, and in this respect he is not a pleasant host. But since he never cheated his card-playing friends—so supposing he does get excited?—what of it? His father "alav hashalom" (may he rest in peace) used to go into a rage over the least little thing, and yet he had a heart of gold.

His mother "aleha hashalom" (may she rest in peace)

used to say, "When my husband starts to holler, people would think that he is a gazlan, a murderer. But who knows better than I what a diamond he is?"

Time and again Bank has promised himself that he will keep cool at the card table, but it seems that the spirit of his father is always with him.

"Here's the evening paper," says Mrs. Bank. "Read something, and tell me what's going in this world of ours. If it is fated that you must stay home this evening, then let me know that I have a husband who amounts to something. Honest-to-God, each time I pass by Graff's house and see him reading the paper to his wife—of course, you know how ignorant she is—yet I almost envy her. I, at least, would understand if you would read to me."

His ears are deaf to her suggestion.

A thought comes to him. It is a long, long time since he has seen his poor brother, Ike. Since there is nothing else to do he might as well call on him. . . .

\* \* \*

Ike Bank is sitting at a table in Levy's Lunch Room surrounded by a group of fellow-workers at Pipkowitz's junk shop. Some of them drink tea and others refresh themselves with seltzer. A game of cards is under way. No money, of course; they play for chips. Yankel, the tailor, is there, too. Yankel, who is well posted on all current events, is their authority on such matters, and at various times while they are playing he favors them with inside information as to what really is going on in the world. Of course, he is not considered a kibitzer, for they are mindful of the fact that he is not a card player. He is with them just to be sociable.

Ike today is in good spirits. After working many years



in the junk yard he has just been made foreman of the yard, and he is rejoicing in the fact that from now on he will supervise the sorting of the iron and tin—while the others do the actual work.

"Say, Ike, does your rich brother know that you are a foreman now? That brother of yours will be proud of you."

The fellow asking this question knows that Ike is not on good terms with his brother, and by doing so he knows he is also touching Ike's weak spot.

"No, but if I should ever own a yard of my own, then I suppose my brother would admit that we are both offspring of the same father and mother," Ike answers. "In the meantime, I am just a working man, a common, ordinary fellow and not his equal, and besides, since he doesn't worry about me why should I bother about him? I am sure he is not interested how I'm doing and what I'm doing."

"Hello, Reuben," someone says, and Ike looks up to see his ten year old boy entering.

"Pa," says Reuben, "come home and you'll find a big surprise."

"What is it?" asks father Ike.

"Uncle Benjamin is there. He came in a big automobile."

Ike is surprised.

Bitterness mingled with sweet recollections fills his heart and mind. He avoids the glances of his friends. From the corner of his eyes he notices the beaming face of his son.

For Reuben the visit of his rich uncle is a great event.

Ike composes himself. With a calculating attitude he figures the weeks and the months since last he heard from his brother. He remembers that when his daughter,

Miriam, married, brother Benjamin dropped in just for a while with the air of—as one would say, “Look who’s here!” Of course, his wife did not come with him. Ike fully realizes that he is not any more an ordinary working man. He is now a foreman. And for that matter if he were not a God-fearing man he could probably force Pipkowitz to give him a share in the business. So all things considered he is just as important a person as his brother Benjamin is.

“Well, Ike,” says Yankel, “aren’t you going home and say a nice good evening to your rich brother? Since he came to visit you, I am sure he is anxious to see you.”

Ike smarts under the tone of Yankel’s remark. In the same manner that he, as foreman, might order the removal of a piece of junk from one part of the yard to the other, he says, “Reuben, go home and tell your rich uncle that I am busy with my friends. However, if he wants my company he can come here and join us in a card game.”

### SLUMBERING!

It is quite a while since Hyman Baronsky has been having difficulty in climbing the elevated steps. Each day he feels his heart palpitating faster as he reaches the platform. A few times he has tried to take the street car which is not far from his home. This would also bring him to his business downtown; although it is not far, yet the few blocks tire him out.

A number of friends who go downtown each morning have offered to pick him up with their cars, but he has paid dearly for their rides. He doesn’t want their favors any more.

How well he remembers the day when Ben Gold in-

vited him in his car. Gold, somehow strong with the politicians, feels that he is a privileged character. As such he drove his car so fast that he was stopped by a policeman. All his arguments that the alderman of the ward was his friend and that the city clerk was his pal and that he bowled with the state's attorney did not help. As a matter of fact, he antagonized the traffic policeman who arrested both of them. Thus Baronsky lost a half day of business.

Baronsky also remembers about his mistake of riding downtown with Sam Sussman, who made a dozen business stops on the way, and as a result Baronsky lost two customers who did not wait for him.

So he has come to the conclusion that no matter how hard it was for him to climb the "L" steps, he would be sure to reach his place of business in time. Suppose he does feel a beating of his heart and if his breathing is heavy! So what! Baronsky realizes that he is not young any more . . . besides, even the young die . . .

This morning he reaches the train just in time. The car being half empty, he finds a comfortable seat and relaxes. For him the passengers getting on and off at each station do not exist. His mind and thoughts are on the bitter experiences of last night.

He had on his list a few names on whom to call and collect contributions for the Talmud Torah, where needy children are given a Jewish education. He succeeded in obtaining money from some, but those who refused broke his heart. These were the ones to whom he had to climb to the third floor. After reaching them he could hardly talk. For instance, he was told by one that since the factories were running at full speed people should be able to pay for their children's education. One said that he had just enough to pay the dues for his clubs

and other such necessities. Still another argued that he would find it hard enough to take care of expected relatives from abroad.

What worried Baronsky most was that these people who refused him were those who had come with him from the old country, and who brought with them all the fine traditions and ideals from Jewish homes. Here they cast it all aside and turned a deaf ear to his pleas.

He thinks now of the great number of men who for many years supported the synagogue in which he is still active and who now have departed this life. Even the honking of cars will not disturb their everlasting sleep.

All these thoughts add to his weariness. He is tired and his head sinks on his chest; he falls asleep.

At the next station Samuel Malowsky enters the car. He is of the retired class. He is well satisfied with his achievements and security. He gives the impression that he should make pilgrimages to the grave of his mother in gratitude to her for having brought him into the world.

He at once notices the sleeping Baronsky. Only last night Baronsky was at his house. At first he has the urge to awaken and greet him, just to have someone to talk to. But he too is somewhat tired. So he sits next to his sleeping friend without disturbing him.

Within himself Malowsky carries a hidden grudge against Baronsky, because last night he troubled him for a donation for the Talmud Torah. Malowsky repeats to himself the same argument used the night before: "Always give, give, give! Really, in these days even a gold mine would not be enough to satisfy every one."

Little by little Malowsky's eyes begin to close and he, too, falls asleep.



At the Fullerton station the train suddenly stops short with a scraping noise. Both Baronsky and Malowsky wake with a start.

"Hello!" calls out Baronsky.

"Hello," replies Malowsky, "I see you also had a nap."

"I am very tired," sighs Malowsky.

"You tired?" says Baronsky with surprise. "I can't understand it. You, a retired businessman with enough to live on and no need to worry about your bread and butter for tomorrow! Why should you be tired?"

"Yes, it's easy to talk," grumbles Malowsky. "Do you realize what it means when friends call on you at my age and make you stay up late and play cards with them? And besides, do you think it is easy to forget when you lose \$100 in one evening? God, how tired I am!"

## SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

LIEUTENANT JAMES STONE was moved after a multitude of hands applauded his speech.

As a matter of fact, he was more than moved. His heart was filled with pride and satisfaction, realizing he had carried his message to such a large audience, spread out in a big park under the canopy of heaven, with microphones attached to trees all over the ground.

It was the annual gathering of war veterans from all Lincolnville County. They had come with all their families.

Lt. Stone, who had just returned from overseas after two years, had been designated by the army to address this gathering.

When the commander and other officers of the veterans complimented Lt. Stone on his patriotic speech, he was pleased for another reason. As a conscientious Jew, proud

of his heritage, it was a great satisfaction to him that he was appreciated.

"Lt. Stone," said the commander of the veterans, "I would consider it an honor and privilege that you visit our home. There will be many of our friends there. Of course, we are modest people, but we will make it comfortable for you until train time."

"I welcome your hospitality," answered the Lieutenant, with his usual modesty.

After sandwiches and a few drinks, James Wilcox, the town's hardware man, was the first to open the conversation.

"I take it for granted that you must be a lawyer or something like that, because you are some speaker, I am telling you. When you come to this neighborhood after the war is over, we will run you for any office you want."

Lieutenant Stone explained that he had practiced law before he enlisted in the army.

When one of the others wanted the Lieutenant to tell how long he thought the war would last, the host spoke with a wave of the hand.

"We military men don't speak about such things and we have no right to prophecy. I wish I were twenty-five years younger and I would again join the army. This time I would arrange to visit Berlin instead of Paris."

This gesture brought applause from the rest of the folks.

"May I ask a question of the Lieutenant?" remarked Daniels, the grocery man, putting on a sanctimonious face. "How will this county cope with the Jews, whose international bankers brought on this war?"

"Tut, tut, tut," again the host interfered; "this is tommyrot. I am sick and tired of hearing such nonsense. You just watch the daily papers carefully and read

of the heroic Jews who give their lives in this global war. Dan, it seems to me you still can't forget the Jewish grocery man, Rosenberg, who was here for a few years. He's not here any more, so why do you bellyache?"

This brought laughter from all the guests.

But there was one who did not even smile. That was Lt. James Stone.

When he stood up and again won admiration for his good looks, his blue eyes and blonde hair and tall figure, he took them by surprise.

"My good friends, I understand that the train leaves very late, and I am somewhat tired. I shall appreciate very much if you direct me to a hotel, where I can stay overnight. I must do some writing and make a few long distance calls."

When the Lieutenant had departed, escorted to the hotel by one of the veterans, Schulze, the town butcher, came out with a shocking assertion.

"People, I'll bet you any amount of money that I know why the Lieutenant suddenly made up his mind to leave. I was watching him pretty carefully and I am sure that he is a Jew."

"To be honest with you," came back the host, "I wasn't altogether sure whether he belongs to the Jewish people, but I am mighty glad for what I said. If he is Jewish at least let him know that not all of us are stupid and narrow-minded. By golly, in the last war my best buddy was a Jewish boy from Philadelphia, who shared everything he received from home with me, and when I was convalescing in a French hospital he showed real brotherly love for me. And let me tell you, even today I have many good friends among the Jews, and some of their sons, who are now fighting on all fronts, I knew when they were youngsters."

"But I read in the papers," Daniels started to say. He was interrupted by the commander who spoke in anger.

"Yes, it depends what paper or magazine one reads. Some of those publications feed their readers with lies and misrepresentations, and I sometimes feel that our press is too free."

Oscar Hanson, who supplied the town with milk and had been silent until now, stood up.

"Well, let us not spoil our celebration with discussion. Let's have a drink to our commander and to the boys who will soon return and join our veterans."

"Shall we drink milk?" remarked one laughing.

"We have something stronger than that," said the commander with a smile.

\* \* \*

At the very moment when Lt. Stone turned in the key to the hotel proprietor, who was also the clerk, the commander appeared.

The Lieutenant was somewhat surprised. He greeted the commander by saying, "Hello, what brings you here so early in the morning?"

The commander stood for a while as one trying to collect his thoughts, and with his eyes to the floor, spoke his piece.

"Lt. Stone, I want you to believe me that I didn't close my eyes last night. I hope that you will forget what that narrow-minded man said about your people. I wish to assure you that the majority of this community are genuine Americans. It was my good fortune to read such books as 'Justice to the Jew,' written by a Christian clergyman. My good friend, Isaac Shapiro, who has a dry goods store a few miles from here, was good enough to lend me a book called 'The Jewish Contribution to



Civilization,' and from all of these I have learned that the Jewish people are just as good as other people."

The commander wanted to say more, but Lt. Stone placed his right hand on his shoulder and replied pleasantly.

"My dear commander, I too did not sleep last night. I have been thinking during the long hours how to legislate in Congress, in our state legislatures, laws that discrimination, hatred, and bigotry should be eliminated in our land, dedicated to liberty and freedom by its founders."

Arm in arm the two walked away to the train.

### BANKING ON FLORIDA

THE Bursky house was overcrowded with friends and acquaintances who had just returned from Florida.

Some had known each other before they had made their pilgrimage to that luxurious mecca of vacationers. Others had met each other in the land of sunshine.

It was upon the initiative of Mrs. Bursky that they all gathered to reminisce about their experiences in Florida.

It must be said that in this instance speaking of Florida did not include the Seminole Indians who as yet had not awakened to the fact that they were in competition with other Indians.

It was unknown to this gathering that Florida was also blessed with a beautiful university and many cultural and religious institutions. Their knowledge of Florida was limited to one particular spot—Miami Beach.

Mrs. Leon Berkowitz, who had spent six weeks in Miami Beach without her husband, whom she brought

with her tonight, was the first to speak, in her high, thin voice.

"I'll never forget the experience I had at the Mocambo Night Club when all of a sudden a fat *yente* from New York jumped up and said to her husband, 'You stay here; I'll come right back. I have *yahrzeit* tonight after Ma and I have to run to the hotel to light an oil lamp. You better finish my ham sandwich.'

"Of course, after the *yente* left, her husband started to look around the tables for some fancy lady. But before he had time, his wife came back. When he asked her how she had made it so quickly, she told him that she had bribed the taxi driver with ten dollars."

"I had a better experience at the Hialeah Race Track," began Mrs. Rose Lubin, who had also visited Miami Beach by herself, but was accompanied by her husband tonight. "I was watching the races and praying that my horse would win. Next to me stood a real loud-mouth who was not interested in winning but kept on saying, 'This horse I could use for my milk wagon and that horse is not even fit for that.' When I asked him not to talk so loud, he got mad and said 'Shrrup.' Two gentlemen sitting near me didn't like the way he spoke and they punched him in the nose. As a matter of fact, his nose was bleeding."

At this moment, Mr. Berkowitz injected, "You mean you were the cause of shedding Jewish blood?"

"Is it true," Lubin inquired, "that one of the papers in Miami Beach expressed surprise that washrooms were not rented to the influx of vacationers since all the rooms in the hotels and apartment houses were overcrowded?"

"You mean toilets," Mrs. Berkowitz corrected.

"You know," Rachel Rabin, who had visited Florida with her husband who was here tonight too, said, "I

must say that my husband was very nice about my buying clothes and other stuff on Lincoln Road where they rob you. As a matter of fact, deep in my heart I knew that I was being held up. But somehow everybody was doing it and so I did it too. Now when I came home I compared these clothes with my other ones, and I was ashamed to walk to the mirror because whenever I looked into it I saw a fool."

To this her husband remarked, "You don't have to go to the looking glass . . ."

The whole audience broke into laughter and Mrs. Rabin said good-naturedly, "I could just kill him for such remarks."

"Girls, I would like to ask you a question," Mr. Bursky addressed the gathering. "Only yesterday I met Mrs. Rogolsky, the wife of our baker, a fine *haimishe mame*. Her children forced her to go to Florida for a rest, since she helps her husband the whole year around. She is sun-burned and looks marvelous. But all of you look the same as when you left, and as a matter of fact some of you look tired, and none of you have a coat of tan. Why is that? Didn't the Florida sun shine on you too?"

For a moment there was silence in the room. One could notice that the face of Mrs. Berkowitz was covered with gloom. This morning she had visited her doctor, who gave her a calling down for not taking a rest during her visit to Florida. She had come back with a higher blood pressure and without any improvement.

"It is very simple," Mr. Rabin explained. "The baker's wife didn't go under a roof except when she visited the synagogue. The rest of the time she enjoyed the God-given sunshine and fresh air. While the rest of our darling wives took in horse races, dog races, night clubs, and in their spare time played mah jong."

While Mrs. Rabin was not annoyed at her husband's previous remark about her buying clothes, she was not pleased with his last comment.

"We're not all baker's wives who slave. . . . We are different."

The reminiscing about Florida went on until late at night, and sandwiches were served before they left.

On the way home, Mrs. Berkowitz asked her husband about the quiet conversation he had held with Mr. Lubin.

"Well," Berkowitz answered, "he told me that the same day his wife returned from Florida, two checks also returned from the bank for insufficient funds."

## HE DOUBLES IT

IT WAS a Sunday afternoon.

Max Gordon sat in his automobile studying the financial and sporting sections of the Sunday newspaper.

His face did not express much happiness. Whether it was due to the gloomy news in the financial world or to the unhappy information on the sports pages was hard to tell.

He put aside the newspaper when he saw the children flock out of the doors of the synagogue in great numbers. He was watching for his nine-year-old Rosaline, who was one of the pupils.

He himself was not a member of the congregation. But he paid the usual fee so that his daughter should be able to attend the Sunday school. As a matter of fact, he and his wife were somewhat reluctant about their child's attending. But when a neighbor next door remarked, "Children who don't get a Jewish education may be



considered spiritual orphans," they were convinced. Hence their daughter was enrolled in the school.

Mr. Gordon became uneasy when he did not see his Rosaline among the children. After ten minutes, waiting until all the children had disappeared, he was alarmed. His first thought was that perhaps Rosaline had not gone to school this morning.

However, he was attracted by the sound of singing voices from within the synagogue.

He left his car to enter the building. As he walked up the steps, the voices of the children became clearer.

In his childhood, Gordon had been forced by his father to attend the synagogue every Friday night and Saturday morning. Since he had left home, he had not even entered a Jewish house of worship. This was perhaps the reason for his hesitating to enter the synagogue. But the children's voices drew him. . . . Who could tell, perhaps his Rosaline was among them. . . .

He had guessed correctly.

Upon the altar stood about twenty children, most of them girls, watching the director in front of them intently. They were singing *En Kelohenu*.

Gordon knew that Rosaline was attending the school, but not that she was also in the children's choir. Though he was not musically inclined himself, he could detect the sweet, ringing voice of his child. . . .

He was touched.

When the children concluded the singing, the director noticed that they all looked towards the door, especially Rosaline.

When Morris Silverman, the director, turned around he was immediately recognized by Max Gordon.



It was only a few days before that Morris Silverman had called on Gordon with some samples of merchandise. Gordon, the hard buyer, informed Silverman that he was not interested. And here the same Silverman to whom he had acted so indifferently and brusquely was interested in his child. . . .

At this time Max Gordon wanted to avoid meeting Silverman again, so he rushed back to his car. Rosaline joined him afterwards.

"Do you know," the father inquired of his child, "the name of the man who teaches you singing?"

"Sure, daddy," she replied. "His name is Mr. Silverman and all of us love him because he is teaching us how to sing Jewish songs and he is so nice to us. Daddy, he is a nice man."



Monday morning, when Silverman received a telephone call from Gordon, he was rather surprised.

An hour later, Silverman was greeted by Gordon at the latter's place of business.

"Did you bring your samples with you?" Gordon inquired with a twinkle in his eye.

"I didn't know for what purpose you telephoned me, and besides you know the manufacturers I represent and the merchandise they sell."

After Gordon had placed a substantial order with Silverman, he said to him, "I see that you never rest. You even work on Sundays. Are you paid well by the congregation for teaching the children singing?"

"Paid?" Silverman smiled pleasantly. "In the first place I am not getting paid, and furthermore, there isn't enough money in the world to compensate me for the pleasure and joy I derive when I succeed in instructing

our children in harmony. You see, Mr. Gordon, quite a number of fellows of your type have the idea that all some of us do is measured by the dollar yardstick. My contribution to the congregation is to teach the children singing. I know something about it. Each one tries to do something in the field which he knows best. Take, for example, one of our members, Sol Rubin. He knows a lot about property. So he is chairman of the House Committee. That is, he is responsible for the property which the congregation owns, and you will be surprised how much time he puts into it. When he is out of town, Melvin Nelson assumes the responsibility. All in all, all of us try in our own way to help our community."

There was silence for a few moments. Gordon was deep in thought. Suddenly he raised his head, looked at Silverman, and asked pointedly, "Do you carry membership applications for the congregation with you?"

### AT REST

THE front room of the modest flat of Lippe Lapowsky was overcrowded. Half the members of Congregation Anshe Tzedek (Men of Justice) were there to discuss a very important problem.

Lippe, being first trustee and at the same time host, tried his best to call the meeting to order. He was taking the place of the president who was vacationing in Florida with his wife, Minnie.

The reason for this special meeting was to discuss a problem resulting from the death of a former member, Jacob Jacobowsky. Jacobowsky had been president of the shul in the early days and he had contributed a great deal of money to it.

A few years before he had moved from this *haimishe*

neighborhood and joined a congregation which could not be called reform or conservative; but it had a tint of "*Kalvarier Deitchen*."

When Lepowsky succeeded in quieting the shouts and loud talking, Pinyah Rapoport, one of the trustees, took the floor.

"All these years, since Jacobowsky moved into that swell neighborhood and joined that fancy congregation, we never heard from him. The constitution of our congregation provides that if a member separates himself from us for ten years or more, his lot on our cemetery becomes our property. Jacobowsky died that morning and I understand that they wired his son in San Francisco to come to the funeral. I say to you that his other son, who is a very rich man, will soon call up our cemetery superintendent in reference to opening a grave. We should not permit Jacobowsky to rest on our cemetery unless we get two hundred dollars for each year that he stayed away."

Hyman Zaretsky, who, though he had never held any office in Congregation Anshe Zedek, carried weight on account of his reputation for having common sense, replied.

"I was not present when our constitution was drawn up. But I for one would have never permitted such a clause to be included. A congregation composed of *rachmanim bene rachmanim* (merciful sons of merciful fathers) should take revenge from a dead person?"

"Who speaks of revenge from the dead?" Pinyah Rapoport thundered. "He is dead and he doesn't know a thing. It is his children who deserted us altogether. It is from them that we want money.

"We need money to fix the roof of our synagogue. Our rabbi hasn't received his salary for the last six months.



As a matter of fact, his wife was in to see me the other day and complained that the groceryman and the butcher don't want to extend any more credit to her. We now have a chance to get a few dollars and we should take it.

"Furthermore, this lot is next to the grave of our old rabbi, of blessed memory, and believe me there isn't enough money in the world to pay for the honor of being buried next to such a great man."

"Look at him! Look at him!" Nahum Carson, the recording secretary, pointed at Rapoport. "When the old rabbi was alive, he tortured him, he belittled him and humiliated him. The only name he had for him was schlemihl. Now he praises him."

"You don't know what you're talking about," Pinyah Rapoport angrily retorted.

Leppe Lepowsky shouted with all his might so that he might be heard.

"There seems to be a great difference of opinion in this matter. How about a compromise? Let's ask the family for only one hundred dollars for each year."

"Nothing doing," Pinyah Rapoport clenched his fist. "This isn't your clothing store where bargaining is done. Two hundred dollars or nothing!"

While the turbulent meeting was going on, the sexton, Simchah Klatz, uttered his gloomy contribution.

"*Yiden, Yiden!* You're all quarreling for nothing. I just called up the Jacobowsky family in reference to opening the grave and I was told that a couple of years ago the family purchased a lot on the Barewood Cemetery, with perpetual care!"

## TWO WEDDINGS

"Why, look who's here!" Mrs. Rose Pickle greeted Mrs. Sonia Kaplan, whom she met in the reception room of Dr. Bert Rapaport, specialist in subduing voices and quieting nerves.

"How are you?" Sonia acknowledged the greeting of her friend. "Why, who would believe that it's almost ten years since we have not seen each other. *Oy veh*, how time flies! It seems to me that I haven't seen you since you attended my Lena's wedding."

There was silence for a moment.

Mrs. Pickle understood her friend's heavy heart, for Lena's marriage was not a successful one. The papers were full of publicity about her divorce case.

"Rose, I suppose you know that Lena divorced her husband. *Oy veh*, did we have trouble. It seems to me that large weddings don't always make happy marriages. Believe me, Rose, Lena's wedding cost us over three thousand dollars. Her bridegroom's parents handed us a list of their relatives to be invited that made our eyes dark. . . . But what could we do? After all, Lena is our only daughter and she was entitled to a nice wedding. And then there were all kinds of *narishkeiten* of which our *babehs* and *zadies* never dreamed. And believe it or not, after we had everything prepared, even the *gefilte fish* for the older folks, we were told also to have *strudel* because a number of the *machatanim* on the other side were Hungarians. *Oy veh*, and what was the end? She had to divorce her *paskudnyak*!"

"How many years were they together?" Mrs. Pickle asked.

"Five bitter years," Mrs. Kaplan answered with a sigh.

"Well," Mrs. Pickle consoled her, "divorces are nothing new. We see them in all families. Lena is young. She will meet another one and God will repay her with happiness for the disappointment she suffered. After all, we ought to be grateful to God that there is no child."

At this moment Mrs. Kaplan was invited by the nurse into the doctor's private office, and Mrs. Pickle remained waiting.

While she was waiting, she thought of her son, Joe, who five years ago had surprised his parents, and played a trick on his girl's folks. While plans were being made for their wedding, they invited a couple of good friends to a rabbi's home and were married. Before leaving for their honeymoon trip, they telephoned their parents.

How well she remembered Joe's explanation:

"Please, Ma, and this goes for Pa too, I am the happiest man in the world that my wife has the same understanding that I have. She too doesn't believe in big weddings where ninety percent of the people are not at all concerned with the lives of the young people, and are only interested in the good eats, and then to have a subject of conversation. . . . Believe me, Ma, we will make up the few hours of superficial, noisy joy that we deprived you of, in other ways."

True, for a few weeks, the parents on both sides had nothing to do with their newly married children when they returned from their honeymoon trip. But now, all has been straightened out. The grandparents on both sides have the joy of playing with two beautiful grandchildren.

\* \* \*

"By the way," Mrs. Kaplan inquired of Mrs. Pickle when she came out of the office, "both of us live in dif-

ferent ends of the city and we don't know what has been going on during the last few years. I even forgot to ask you about your son, Joe. Is he married?"

"Oh, yes," Mrs. Pickle answered, "and I am the grandma of two beautiful grandchildren."

"You mean to tell me," Mrs. Kaplan reprimanded her friend, "that Joe was married and we weren't invited to the wedding?"

"As it happens," Mrs. Pickle explained, "Joe didn't have a public wedding. He took his girl, who comes from very fine parents, to a rabbi and *fartig!*"

"You see," Mrs. Kaplan lamented, "and we fools had to spend a fortune on a wedding. *Oy veh*, and for what?"

\* \* \*

Mrs. Kaplan waited until Mrs. Pickle was taken care of by the doctor and they left the office building together. As they were parting to go home, Mrs. Kaplan said, "*Oy veh*, my friend, tell me, does it pay to spend money on expensive weddings?"

## IT'S IN THE BAG

DURING the fifteen years that Goldie Zaremby had been married to her husband Hyman—whom she had nicknamed Hy—she had never awaited his return as anxiously as tonight. This was the beginning of a new venture for her husband.

It was not a business venture. It was his first day as a full-fledged letter carrier wearing a brand-new uniform. This uniform was different from the one he had worn in the first World War as an infantryman.

During the whole day, Goldie could not remove from her mind the picture of her husband carrying a heavy



leather bag full of mail. When reminiscences now and then came into her mind of happy days filled with riches and plenty, she tried to dismiss them. What was paramount in her mind, was her Hy trudging along with the mail.

During the past years, she had been very kind to the postmen who delivered the mail to her door. In the winter she would invite them in for a hot cup of coffee and in the summer days for a cold glass of lemonade. She knew it was against the rules of the Department, but she found ways to circumvent the regulations.

She found some consolation in her husband's present occupation because he was delivering in a district where he did not have to climb steps, since the bulk of the residents lived in private homes.

It was late in the day. The supper on the stove was all done. She put water in the tub; placed her husband's slippers near the easy chair; and walked over to the window awaiting his return. He was everything to her, since they were childless.

To Mrs. Zaremby every minute felt like ages. Every passerby on the corner made her heart jump, hoping that this would be her Hy. At last the happy moment arrived.

There he was coming.

Like a happy child, she rushed to the door to open it for him. When he entered, she embraced him and kissed him warmly.

After helping him off with his coat—quite a heavy garment—and taking off his shoes so that she could put on the slippers, she gazed into her husband's face. He looked tired.

Instead of asking him in her usual manner whether he was tired—although she was prompted to do so—she

said in a cheerful way, "I suppose you met a lot of new people today."

He replied in a depressed tone. "You know, my dear, we mailmen don't see most of the people. We place the mail in the outside boxes and keep on going. That is, except those who are awaiting some important letter; they are usually waiting for us at the door. And if they don't get their expected mail, they are disappointed and make us feel that we are criminals. Of course, I didn't have such experiences myself on my first day, but I was told so by the other postmen."

"Was it heavy for you to carry your bag today?" she asked.

"Not so very heavy," he answered. "Fortunately this is the middle of the month and we are not so burdened with magazines and periodicals as in the beginning of the month. But I had to deliver mail to one person today—and I suppose I'll have to do it every day—which made it harder than carrying the heaviest pack."

In amazement she asked, "Who is this person?"

Hy rose from the chair and turned to the window, gazing silently outside.

She walked over to him and softly asked, "Won't you tell me who is the person that disturbed you so much today?"

"Yes, Goldie dear, of all the people in the world, I have to deliver mail to my old partner who ruined me. He buried himself in a big house surrounded with trees and flowers, and of all people he had to come out while I was delivering the mail. Of course, I had my eyes down so as not to meet his glance."



It was six months since Hyman had started as a postman. He had adjusted himself to his new government position and one would think that he had been in the occupation for many years.

Realizing that the income of her husband was limited, Goldie marvelously managed her household expenses. All in all, both of them were very happy.

Goldie's happiness was manifoldly increased when her Hyman returned from work one evening with the happiest expression on his face.

"I've got interesting news," he said.

"Well, quick, let me hear it," she demanded.

"While I was delivering the mail today to my ex-partner, who ruined me, I found the sheriff and a lot of deputy sheriffs moving his furniture from the house. I learned that he had used all kinds of politics in order not to pay taxes on the house, and there were so many liens on the property that it didn't belong to him anymore. The sheriffs and the deputies looked like good fellows. I gave them a helping hand."

### A VOW WITHOUT WORDS

It is early morning and Gussie Shapiro is prepared to make her weekly pilgrimage to Waldheim Cemetery.

It is over a year since her husband Hyman was laid to rest. She has not missed a week visiting his grave. Her lamentations ring through the whole cemetery. Her crying is already well-known to most of the caretakers. Every word is just as from a prayer book. But she is the composer.

"Hyman, Hyman, look what you have done to me! I always told you that I did not care for your insurance. I only wanted you—you—my dear Hyman; and now

you've left me all alone except for our banker and our lawyer who torment me with their investments and other troubles. Hyman, Hyman, look what you have done to me!"

This morning she is somewhat disturbed. Her daughter-in-law, Mary, has phoned that she wants to see her about a very serious matter. This is the second time Gussie is to meet her daughter-in-law since she married her son Jack five years ago. She wonders what Mary has on her mind.

Mary arrives, and Gussie Shapiro inquires, "About what are you disturbed?"

Her non-Jewish daughter-in-law seems to have her argument long prepared. She starts without hesitation.

"When I married Jack, I promised him I would make him a good Jewish wife. I was much impressed with the rabbi who instructed me in the Jewish religion. I pleased him all these years with gefilte fish, that I learned to make to perfection; kreplach; and even Russian borsht, the kind you always made for him.

"All these years I pleaded and begged him that in return he should become more Jewish. As a matter of fact, I am not honest with myself when I say *more Jewish*. I feel sometimes that he isn't a Jew at all. Please tell me, Mother Shapiro, did you ever teach him to say his night prayer before going to bed? Did he ever pray in the morning? Has he ever done anything while a boy to show that he was Jewish? I was brought up in a religious home and for the love of him I became Jewish. But my house is empty of religion and I can't make him even go to the synagogue once a week. When I ask him to take me to services, one time he will tell me he is tired. The second time he will tell me that we can be good Jews without



going to shul. Well, I don't understand it. All I can tell you, Mother Shapiro, is that my life is monotonous, and I came here to ask you to help me. I want to be a good Jewish mother for my expected child. . . ."

\* \* \*

This sudden information brought color to the face of Gussie Shapiro. She lifted her eyes and looked steadily into the face of her pleading daughter-in-law, the one about to make her a grandmother. With a sense of guilt she said, "What can I do? This is America and children have their own way."

"Well," came the reply from Mary, "I, too, was born in America and I was religious all my life."

At this moment Gussie Shapiro felt spiritually bankrupt. She could find no answer. Instead she rushed over to the telephone and called up her son.

"Jack, I am going this morning to the cemetery to visit your father and I am not going to drag along on street-cars. You better come over with your automobile and take me over there. What do you say—you are busy? I was not too busy to buy this automobile for you. After all, it's my car. Besides, when you come you will have a real surprise."

When Jack came he was more than surprised. His face expressed irritation.

"Ahal!" he reprimanded his Mary, "I suppose you came here to complain to Ma that I am not a good Jew. How can mother help you? This is my personal business, and besides—are you missing anything since you married me?"

"I am missing a lot," Mary answered. "I am missing the spirit of God in our home. I am lonesome and I came to your mother for help. Everybody tells me that she is

a good religious Jewish woman. I am also told that a few years ago she donated an ark to a synagogue."

Pride and satisfaction appeared on the face of Gussie Shapiro. "Well, I am glad people still remember my donation to the synagogue."

Turning to her Jack, she said, "We are now going to the cemetery to visit your father, and this time Mary is going with us."

"Mother Shapiro, I am very happy to go with you. Jack's father is my father."

The cemetery once again resounded with Gussie Shapiro's lamentations.

"Hyman, Hyman, look what you have done to me. I always told you that I did not care for your insurance. I only wanted you—you—my dear Hyman. And now you've left me all alone except for our banker and our lawyer who torment me with their investments. Hyman, Hyman, look what you have done to me!"

Mary was moved by this scene, but Jack stood by indifferently.

All of a sudden, the mother turned to her son and thundered, "Jack, I want you to take a vow right here at the grave of your father that from now on you will go to the synagogue and you will help Mary make a Jewish home! She is filling your stomach with gefilte fish, kreplach, and with everything. Now fill her heart with religion. You hear me? Answer!"

Jack walked closer to the grave of his father. This time he was moved and he broke into tears. . . . He did not say a word.

The two women understood him.

As they entered the automobile, Mary said, "Don't worry, Mother, any more. I don't have to tell you that Jack is always a man of his word."

## BITTER CANDY

FOR a number of years Aaron Bass sold bags of candy in the offices of one of the large buildings downtown.

To most of his customers—mostly stenographers, bookkeepers, and filing clerks—he was known as “Aaron the candy man.”

He was one of those lovable souls who could win friends with his honest eyes and pleasant face. Now and then, the proprietor of an office would resent his disturbing the help and would be ready to tell “Aaron the candy man” not to come any more. But the moment he met Aaron’s face he could not do it.

As a matter of fact, Aaron Bass did not have to sell candy for a livelihood. He and his wife lived with their unmarried sons and daughters, by whom they were loved and respected.

It would make a story in any of the popular magazines, how the daughters and sometimes even the sons wanted to help their mother wash the dishes after the delicious dinners she prepared.

While the turmoil of the clanging of dishes went on in the kitchen, father Aaron would apply himself to the study of some holy book.

Aaron Bass insisted upon selling candy even after his children demanded he give it up, because he wanted his own money to contribute to his shul and other charitable institutions to which he had been devoted for many years.

Many times he would remark to his wife Dinah, “It is enough for our fine children to take care of our needs. I have no right to burden them by asking them

to give charity to my institutions. After all, Dinah, they have their own places to give to."

It was therefore a surprise to "Aaron the candy man" when the elevator starter, whom everybody knew simply as Joe, informed him, "No more candy selling in this building. New manager, you know. Orders. Sorry, Mr. candy man; like you myself. But orders are orders."

Of course there were reasons why the starter liked Aaron Bass. The latter would often reward him with a bag of candy and say, "Please take this home for your family, and may they eat it in good health."

"For ten years I have sold candy here," lamented Aaron Bass, "and did not hurt anybody. Everybody knows me. I know them. Why should the new manager object?"

"Orders are orders," the starter repeated.

For a few minutes Aaron Bass stood lost in his thoughts. He thought of the news items in the Yiddish papers revealing that anti-Semitism was getting stronger in this country. He therefore reasoned that the new building manager must also be one of those who disliked the Jews.

It took him a long while to propound the question to the starter.

"Tell me, Joe, is the new manager one of those bad men who doesn't like the Jews?"

Joe's laughter resounded through the lobby.

"What are you talking about? Why, old man, the new manager is one of youse people. A young guy who wants to do lots of things here. He ain't one of ours. He's yours, and his name is Seymour Patt."

"Think of that, one of our own," lamented Aaron Bass.



"Tell me, Joe," he asked, "any chance of talking to the new manager?"

"Not a chance in the world," Joe responded with assurance. "That guy is busy like a cockroach, candy man."

\* \* \*

The ambitious Seymour Patt, who was still a bachelor, usually would go to a popular restaurant on the corner for dinner. There he met a number of other real estate men with whom he discussed values of property and other subjects familiar to those who deal with bricks and stones.

The last few weeks he had been paying attention to a brunette waitress whose charming manner and pleasant personality had attracted him. In a careful manner he found out that she was Jewish, attending college, and working her way through the university by working part time in the restaurant.

Several times he had tried to strike up a conversation with her. But she paid no attention to him.

These rebuffs increased his interest.

On one occasion he tried to attract her attention by commenting on the apple pie she had served him for dessert.

To cut him short, she said, "If I were you I would express thanks to the cook in the kitchen. I am not doing the cooking. I only wait on people."

She said it with so much pride and dignity that he was impelled to speak further.

"I wonder if I could invite you to a good show. Please believe me, you are one of the few to whom I ever extended such an invitation."

To this she replied, "And you are one of the few who would deprive an old man of selling candy in a building,

who wants to make a dollar with which to do charity in his own way."

### HE WAS NOT THERE

THE tables in the dining room of the club were crowded with diners.

There was not as much commotion this evening as usual. This was possibly due to the fact that many mothers had succeeded in procuring sitters for their children, so they did not bring them to the club for dinner.

One long table in a private dining room was surrounded by a group of young girls, evidently sorority sisters.

Most of them were smoking cigarettes, puffing the smoke upward to the ceiling. Even the most qualified anthropologists would not have been able to tell that they were Jewish. It seems that the characteristic Jewish nose is disappearing. . . .

At another table, a group of young rabbis, most of them former chaplains, were entertaining one of their colleagues who had just returned from the Pacific after serving for over two years. Some of them had their rebbetzins with them. They urged their guest that he too get married. To which he explained, "As soon as I get a pulpit, I'll start looking for a life companion."

At another table four real estate men were studying a blueprint of a building. They studied it silently. . . . After all, real estate has a lot of secrets and the walls have ears. However, the quiet of the room was disturbed when a cup of coffee was spilled over the blueprints and some of its hot contents poured over the trousers of one of the company.

In the center of the club, eight young women surrounded an elderly lady—all of them acting in a dignified manner—though one could detect a feeling of uneasiness. This was true of all except one who was making noise with her soup, assuming an attitude of “what do I care.”

All in all for one who wanted to enjoy a peaceful meal this was the ideal evening.

Suddenly the door of the kitchen opened and out came one of the waitresses carrying a huge cake with candles in it.

She brought it over to the table where the elderly lady and the eight young women were sitting. The song followed—“Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you. . . .”

Ordinarily under such circumstances people join in singing this beautiful song. This time, however, the singing was limited to the young women at the table with the old lady. The rest of the guests did not participate. They merely raised their heads in the direction of the table.

The sorority sisters broke into snickers.

The old lady was almost exhausted in trying to blow out the candles on the cake.

\* \* \*

Mr. and Mrs. Max Rosovsky were driving home in their automobile after a heavy dinner at the club. They were discussing the birthday party at length.

“I can’t understand it,” Mrs. Rosovsky remarked. “I know Mrs. Pinsk well. I know her husband and I knew her children when they were quite young. Since they have a fine home of their own, why have a birthday party in public and disturb other people who are not interested?”

"Well," Mr. Rosovsky replied in a disinterested manner, "you can never tell these days what people do. It probably is a question of getting help. Besides, if people want to have it in the club, whose business is it?"

"I always forget," Mrs. Rosovsky retorted, "that talking to you is like talking to a stick. Nothing bothers you. I can never get any satisfaction talking to you. Everything is all right with you. You seldom notice a new dress that I put on. With you it is always *nisht mein dayge*. Don't you worry, I'll find out why Mrs. Pinsk had her birthday party in the club and why her husband was not there."

"Even this doesn't bother me," Mr. Rosovsky said, a little annoyed. "If you don't have anything else to do, call Mrs. Pinsky and find out."

"Sure I will!" she answered positively.

\* \* \*

The next day, when Mr. Rosovsky returned from his downtown business, Mrs. Rosovsky met him at the door, with a look of triumph on her face.

She screamed, "You bet I know all about it! I found out! Last year Mr. Pinsk quarreled with his wife for not telling the truth about how old she was!"

## A BOARDER LINE

DURING her twenty year long widowhood, Mrs. Lea Gerber was never so depressed as she was today.

During her lonely life, she suffered and struggled for a livelihood and succeeded in bringing up her children and giving her boy and girl a fine education. She worked during the day and managed to take care of two rooms which she rented out to boarders. The income



from these rooms enabled her to keep up her flat.

All of these years she was admired by her friends because of her optimism and cheerfulness.

It is understood that *shadchanim* (matchmakers) did not overlook her. They came to her often with propositions. Most of them she laughed off.

When shadchan Gedaliah Lapovsky was persistent in recommending a man whose character and reputation she knew, she cut him off by saying laughingly, "I will make you a proposition. You take this man to the cemetery and bring back my husband. That will be a fine exchange."

As a matter of fact, Mrs. Gerber had reason to be very happy. Her only son was returning from the Army after having received his discharge. He had written a few weeks before that he was bringing a bride with him. He had married her in a small town in Georgia where his camp was located.

Mrs. Gerber was excited when she received the news. She wasted no time in checking up on her daughter-in-law through good friends. She was happy to learn that her son had picked a fine girl from a nice Jewish family. But the problem which had arisen as a result of their arrival made her depressed today.



Fifteen years before, at the age of twenty-five, Ben Ogus had moved in with the widow Gerber. They were somewhat distantly related and he was a landsman of her late husband. They agreed that he would occupy the room and nothing more. He would have to take his meals outside, since she worked during the day and had no time to prepare food for him.

Nevertheless, he joined the family in the Friday night

meal. In return, he would invite her to a Yiddish show.

Now and then some of the neighbors would suggest that she should not waste her life in loneliness and marry him—especially since they were about the same age. But nothing happened.

When the news of her son's impending arrival came she promptly served notice on the other boarder. A week before she had hinted to Ben that he would have to look for another room because his room was also needed for her son and daughter-in-law. His answer was that he did not know where to look for one, and it was hard to part from the house where he had lived for so many years.

A few days later she again inquired whether he was looking for a room; but he took it lightly.

This evening she was planning on bringing up the matter in a more definite manner. That was the reason for her being unhappy.

\* \* \*

It was evening.

Ben entered the house, and silently went to his room. Mrs. Gerber was in the kitchen.

"Is that you?" she called out.

"Yes, Lea," the answer came.

She recognized a note of depression in his voice.

A few moments passed and both came out, she from the kitchen and he from his room. They took their seats at both ends of the table.

Two heads hung sadly.

"Ben," she said, "I don't have to tell you how hard it is for me to remind you that I need your room for my son and his wife. You noticed that I picked no bones with Sam (the other boarder). To be honest with you, I tried

my utmost to find a room for you among our friends. But there is none to be gotten."

"To be honest with you," he replied, his eyes downcast, "up till a few days ago I didn't take it seriously. But I started to look for a room during the last few days, realizing your position, and it seems to me it is hard to get one."

There was silence for a few moments.

As one who is freed from chains, Ben, the lonely boarder, raised his head and with a definite approach he said to his landlady, "I have an idea."

"What is it?" she asked, applying her usual optimism.

"I would not have to move if I marry you."

"Why don't you put more sugar in your tea?" she asked, as they looked at each other smilingly.

## BLACK AND WHITE

SONIA BOROWSKY looked out the front window early in the morning and watched her non-Jewish neighbors cleaning the snow from the front of their houses.

The entire neighborhood was covered with a thick blanket of snow from the blizzard the night before.

She envied her neighbors for being able to do this hard work. Most of them were from the executive class, who did not have to be at their offices at any specified hour.

Her husband, Leon, and her two sons with whom he was associated in business, left early in the morning with the promise that they would clean off the snow when they returned in the evening.

Of course, they did not realize that the Mothers' Club was to meet at their home this afternoon, and if the snow

were not cleaned off they would have a hard time parking their cars.

The God of Israel, Who always watches over His people, brought help to Mrs. Borowsky. She noticed a colored man passing with shovel, broom, and pick on his shoulder.

"Say, there! Would you like to clean off the snow in front of my house?"

"Yes, ma'am," the Negro replied with a smile. "I ain't carrying these things on my shoulder for ornaments. . . . I'll be glad to do it. . . . Why not? . . . Hard to get a job. . . . You know, discrimination all over."

After watching him clean the sidewalks for a while, Mrs. Borowsky retired to the kitchen to finish the preparation of goodies for the expected guests.

She could not stay on her feet long, due to the fact that since she had reduced her health was failing her.

When the door bell rang, it was the Negro coming to collect his pay.

Since she thought he might be hungry she invited him in for a cup of coffee and a sandwich.

She knew he was satisfied with what she had paid him by his hearty appetite.

His face buried in his cup of coffee, he suddenly said, "Lady, what's going to happen to this country since the Jews took everything from us?"

Since his eyes were on the cup, he did not notice how Mrs. Borowsky was shocked.

When she asked him, "What makes you think so?" he explained in a definite, positive tone that twice a week he helped out in the house of a saloonkeeper, Otto Schimmel. Schimmel was the one who had told him all about it. He explained it was the Jews who were responsible for the war. It was the Jews who owned Ger-



many and now they owned this country. The country would have the same downfall here—but it would be quicker because we had no Hitler to protect us.

"Why, lady, you don't know how many white people like Mr. Schimmel come to us colored folks to tell us all about it."

"And you believe all this?" Mrs. Borowsky asked.

"I should say I do," he said, making preparations to leave.

She asked him to wait, stepped out, and returned with a few pamphlets in her hand.

"How much schooling did you have?"

"I went through grade school in Alabama."

"This being the case," she said, placing the pamphlets on the kitchen table, "look at these circulars, and you may learn something better than the information given you by your friend Otto."

While he read the pamphlets his eyes opened wide with astonishment. He discovered that he was in a Jewish home and that the whole Borowsky family was active in civic movements—and particularly in the organizations fighting to defend the rights of the Negro.

"Lady," he started to say . . .

But she stopped him by asking the question, "Did you ever hear about a Jew called Julius Rosenwald?"

"Oh yes, lady, I heard—I heard. The pastor of my church always said that Rosenwald was a white man with a black heart. Oh yes . . . Oh yes, lady. I know—I know. He did a lot for us. You know we celebrate his birthday every year. He was a great man—oh yes, lady."

"Will you change your mind?" she asked him, in the attitude of a schoolteacher reprimanding her pupil.

"Oh yes, lady . . ." he stammered, "but I didn't know that I was in a Jewish home. In Alabama I knew a few

Jews and they had a *mezuzah* on their doors. You know, lady, that's a prayer from the Scriptures written on a piece of parchment and placed in a metal case. But you have none—not on the front door and not even on the kitchen door."

Mrs. Borowsky paid no attention to what he said. But she heard him say as he was leaving, "Oh Lord, I wish there would have been a *mezuzah* on the door."

### A CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

IT WAS late in the afternoon.

Sarah Rapaport had just returned from one of her auxiliary meetings.

She took off her fur coat and threw it on the couch.

"Well, I didn't have to take a back seat for any other woman with my fur coat."

She had nothing to do as far as housekeeping was concerned. She only prepared breakfast for herself and her husband, Jacob. The rest of the meals were served in the dining room of the hotel where she and her husband had made their home for the last few years.

She threw herself into the first comfortable chair and was about to take a cigarette from her silver cigarette case. But she stopped . . .

Only yesterday her grandchild, Seymour, the oldest son of her daughter, Eleanor, had said to her:

"Grandma, I don't like to see you smoking cigarettes."

When she asked him why, his answer was the usual childlike "Because."

That "because" was explained to her late in the afternoon, when she met an old-time friend who was considered a man of understanding.

It was with pride that she related her grandchild's complaint to him. Her friend explained the matter seriously in the following words.

"Don't you see, Mrs. Rapaport, children are honest. They are natural and frank. To him the face of his grandmother is angelic. He wants to see it clearly—not covered with smoke. Children are tender and they love tenderness, and when he sees you puffing on a cigarette, it hurts his sensitive feelings. If you think like the rest of the women that cigarettes are more important than the love and admiration of a grandchild—keep on smoking and may God be with you."

As the urge to smoke became stronger, she tried to lose herself in reminiscing about the past. She thought of the years that she and her husband Jacob had stood behind a plain wooden counter and sold fish. He did the cutting, and she did the scraping of the scales. Quite a number of customers came to her mind vividly; especially those who "ate her heart out" every time they came in to purchase fish for Shabbas or Yom Tov.

True, they were years of labor and toil. Nevertheless, she and her husband were well compensated by raising fine sons and daughters who were a credit to them.

Automatically, her hand reached again for her cigarette case. But the voice of her grandchild rang in her ears: "Grandma, I don't like to see you smoking cigarettes."

She rose from the chair and walked to the grand piano on which the photographs of her entire family were standing, including that of her grandchild.

No one now played the piano. Mrs. Rapaport reminded herself of the days when her now married daughters played Jewish melodies to satisfy their parents.

These melodies rang in her ears, and they were in harmony with the admonition of her grandchild.

\* \* \*

Young Seymour, passing by the hotel on his way home from school, decided to drop in to see his grandmother.

As he stepped into the elevator, the girl operator assured him that he would find his grandmother in her rooms. She also remarked, "Well, Seymour, did you see your grandma's new fur coat?"

He answered, "I am glad that grandpa bought her a nice fur coat."

"Your grandpa is a nice man," the elevator operator said.

To which he answered, "I know it."

When Seymour pushed the buzzer of his grandmother's apartment, there was a great commotion inside. It took a few minutes before she opened the door.

"Grandma," he exclaimed, "I can tell that someone was smoking cigarettes here. Who did it—you?"

Mrs. Rapaport with deep affection embraced her grandson and pressed her lips to his. "Darling, I promise you that that was the last cigarette I will ever smoke."

Seymour said, "I hope that you really will quit smoking, then your breath won't smell of cigarettes when you kiss me."

When Seymour left the room, Mrs. Rapaport walked over to the piano, picked up her grandchild's picture, and pressed it to her heart, saying, "I will keep my promise."

### TEMPORARY PROFESSION

IT WAS A happy day for Moe Bin and Joe Brin when they received their diplomas which entitled them to practice law.



All the members of both their families came to witness the graduation exercises. As the graduates marched in with solemnity, passing the dean of the college, who handed out the diplomas, the audience could hear a voice saying, "There goes Moe." And a little later another voice was heard exclaiming, "There goes Joe."

They had both spent years of toil and hardship until the hour when that rolled-up piece of paper—the diploma—was handed to them.

Moe worked in a public garage during the day and attended law school at night. Joe drove a laundry wagon, using the income to pay his tuition at the same school.

Months before they were to graduate, Moe and Joe had discussed their plans for the future.

It was Moe's idea that in order to make a success in the legal profession, a young lawyer should attach himself to an old established law firm. There one could get an idea of the practical side of law and meanwhile cultivate contacts for the future.

Joe did not agree with his fellow student. He maintained, "It is too much of a risk to be a clerk in a law office. If fortune is with you and some of the old members die, after a year or two you have a chance to step into the shoes of the dead one. Otherwise you are a clerk for the rest of your life. You and I know that the humblest clerk in a grocery store gets more pay than a young lawyer who joins a so-called big law office. I for one could never understand why so little ethics and justice are practiced by the big law firms."

To this Moe answered, "Well, the old established lawyers, I suppose, got the same deal when they started out, and they made a success."

"I still think," Joe countered, "that the best thing is that we start out by ourselves. We ought to join a few

organizations where all the members speak only Yiddish. We will be the only English-speaking members, and when once and a while we inject a Hebrew word in our speeches like *yosher* or *rachmanus*, believe me, overnight we will be tops."

\* \* \*

For one reason or another, the two graduates lost track of each other. Moe carried out his idea and joined a law firm composed of four partners. Three of the partners treated him in a somewhat professional manner, notwithstanding the fact that his salary was meagre and far from being equal to theirs. However, one of the partners often forgot that Moe Bin was also a graduate lawyer. He would send him to the store to do shopping for his wife, and burdened him with other tasks which did not belong to the legal profession.

On one occasion, Moe wanted to show resentment for being so badly treated. But he controlled himself. That was when the fourth partner, Mr. Leon, called him in and said, "Here, Bin, my wife gave me a package to return to the Phoenix Department Store. Get something in exchange. I have no time to go there myself because I have to see the doctor who is going to do something for my arthritis."

The information that Mr. Leon was suffering from arthritis calmed the temper of Moe. After all, who can tell what will happen to a guy who's got arthritis or any other malady? He thought to himself, "I wonder how sick he really is?"

\* \* \*

It took almost two years until Moe was given more responsible work. He would now and then go to court to

get certain cases postponed; he would interview witnesses; draw up contracts for small businessmen; and carry out similar matters pertaining to a law office.

After a while, he became valuable in investigating subrogation cases. This brought him assignments in every part of the city.

While he was investigating one such case in a remote section, he reminded himself of his old friend Joe whom he had not seen nor heard from all this time. As a matter of fact, he could not forgive himself for making no effort to get in touch with his friend, with whom he had spent four years in classrooms.

The blow of a whistle from one of the factories in the neighborhood reminded him that it was time for lunch. Noticing a one story frame building on which there was a sign, "Home Cooking and All Kinds of Sandwiches," with many workingmen hurrying thither, he became lost among them.

Never before had he been so shocked as when he saw his old friend and schoolmate, Joe, standing behind the counter serving food to the rushing, hungry customers.

"Joe," Moe exclaimed, bewildered, "do you work here?"

"Yes, I do," answered Joe. "But I don't eat here!"

### A TEACHER GETS A LESSON

WHEN twelve-year-old Irving returned home in the evening it was almost ten o'clock. He had spent a few hours with his friend Nathan, who was in his class in Hebrew School. His father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Hyman Barwin, had company that night and all of them were playing cards when he arrived home. All were smoking cigarettes, and the smoke reached to the ceiling as the

heat does in a Russian-Turkish bath. Such scenes never impressed little Irving.

Somehow his grandparents, who had gone to their everlasting sleep just last year and who had lived with them since he was born, made a deeper impression on him than his own father and mother, who were always carefree and indifferent so far as spiritual values were concerned.

Irving paid no attention to his parents' guests and went right to his room. He was already in bed when his mother entered in haste to inquire whether he was not feeling well. Notwithstanding his assurance that he was all right, she felt his forehead to be certain and left the room satisfied there was nothing wrong with him.

As he lay in bed, the meeting with his Hebrew teacher and all he had been told during the day's lesson came to his mind. Irving was much impressed with his Hebrew teacher and so were his fellow students, for it must be said that Lomansky was not a mere technician and did not burden his students with language or grammar. Rather he spent the hour or so of the lesson in revealing the lofty ideals of Judaism; defining the traditions, laws, and precepts by which our people lived and survived through all the centuries. This afternoon the teacher had explained that according to the Talmud the man who plays cards is not eligible to be a witness in court. He reasoned that since gambling involves getting even with the other fellow, shielding the truth, and sometimes even cheating, and since habit becomes one's second nature, such a man cannot testify to the truth. On another occasion, his teacher had pointed out the difference between the humane Jewish laws as compared with the prevailing laws of today. Again, according to the Talmud, if one is seen stealing a loaf of bread he is not



to be disturbed, since he is evidently hungry, and by such interference he would be humiliated. According to modern law such a man is considered a thief and is punished by imprisonment. Irving's teacher pointed out the fine way in which Jewish charities are dispensed. According to the Jewish tradition if one feeds ten poor people and nine of them are undeserving and only one worthy, a charitable act has been accomplished.

As young as he was, he had an occasion to quote this prayer to a non-Jewish boy in his public school who once remarked that all Jews were clannish. He pointed out the passage, "O may all, created in Thine image, recognize that they are brethren, so that, one in spirit and one in fellowship, they may be forever united before Thee."

It was almost one o'clock in the morning when he heard the guests departing. A little later his mother entered and she was surprised to find him wide awake. When she kissed him goodnight he was somewhat disturbed by the cigarette odor coming from her mouth. It annoyed him a bit but he soon fell asleep.

\* \* \*

At the breakfast table in the morning, Irving approached his father with a question.

"Dad, were you ever a witness in court?"

Both parents looked up at the young son in amazement and the father asked, "What in the world makes you say that?"

Irving, with childhood embarrassment, answered, "My Hebrew teacher told us that according to Jewish law one who plays cards does not make a good witness in court."

Hyman Barwin's face lit up like fire as he thundered,

"Is this what he is teaching you? Is it for this that I pay him my good money—nothing doing!"

The next morning the teacher Lomansky received a letter from the enraged father, Barwin, wherein it was said, "Send me a bill for how much I owe you and for my part you can sweep streets. You're not fit to be a teacher."

### HOW TIMES DO CHANGE!

IT WAS the first week after my friend had received his diploma, which established him as a doctor of medicine. The dream of years was now to be realized for him. They were hard and difficult years—hardships and sufferings were endured in order to acquire that piece of paper on which he was legalized a medical man. To drive a milk wagon on cold winter mornings and to be eaten up by mosquitoes during vacation time while picking berries and fruit to make a living and to save a few dollars to pay the tuition—that had been his lot.

And now I came to congratulate him. Of course, his office was still very modest. As a matter of fact, friends had helped him buy a chair and instruments. I noticed a couple of paintings on both sides of his diploma.

Patients, however, had not yet opened his door. The doctor's bell remained still; it had not yet been rung.

I called on my friend, the doctor, a few weeks later, and while we were in the midst of conversing, the bell rang.

The doctor sprang to his feet and ran to the door. As he opened it, I heard the wailing of a woman's voice. "Come, doctor! Come, quickly, save my child!"

Instantly he grabbed his instruments, put them in the case, and ran. I had to remind him to take his hat. It was

in those years when we did not meet hatless men on the streets and bald heads on which the sun's rays played. I made up my mind to wait until he returned, to see what effect this call for help would have on my friend.

A half hour later he returned. Satisfaction was written all over his face—he beamed with joy.

“We doctors,” said he, “are the most useful members of society, aren't we? I have just saved a child's life, consoled a mother, and believe me, I somehow feel very proud.”

Knowing that my friend was as yet neither Rockefeller's nor Morgan's partner, and also realizing that he had as yet not paid back the money borrowed for the furniture, I asked, “Well, did you get paid?”

“Who speaks of money?” he replied as if insulted. “Where there's a question of life and death involving a little child, money doesn't enter into the question.”

\* \* \*

We were separated a number of years. Conditions were such that I had no occasion to come in contact with my friend. However, I knew that he had become a successful physician and surgeon. He was well spoken of in the community by all classes. As a matter of fact the older generation would say, “Here is a doctor who reminds us of a genuine European doctor.” This was due to the fact that he was very curt and to the point in his manner of speech with his patients, and instead of giving advice, he commanded—something to which Europeans were accustomed.

I had been told that he had a spacious and well appointed office in a downtown medical building, and he had two nurses assisting him and two secretaries.

An occasion presented itself and I visited his residence in the evening.

Again, as many years before, the bell rang. But this time the doctor did not move.

"Some people have no respect, no manners. They are so uncivilized that they ring a doctor's bell as if it were a fire alarm." This remark from my friend, the doctor, the "most useful member of society."

"Well, when one rings," I suggested, "there surely must be an urgent reason for it—perhaps an accident or a serious emergency."

Slowly the doctor opened the door and a middle-aged man, pale as chalk, almost fell as he stepped into the hall. With utmost effort he cried out.

"I live not far from here—just a short distance—won't you come, please, my wife is very ill—I am afraid she is dying—hurry, doctor, please!"

The doctor took his address and promised to be there soon.

"But doctor, hurry!" the man pleaded.

"Soon! Soon!" my friend the doctor assured him once more and closed the door in his face.

"How is business, and how long do you think this war will last?" inquired the doctor, as he turned to me, seemingly in a peaceful mood.

"About that we will talk later," I replied, and reminded him that he should hurry to the patient to whom he had just been summoned.

With self satisfaction and a dignified air, he replied.

"A young doctor, who has as yet not established a reputation, who is not recognized in the medical profession, and very little known in the community, must run immediately after he is called," he gave me to under-



stand. "But I already have a reputation; and it wouldn't look well if I were to run like one who hadn't yet had his first patient."

"It isn't a question of having the first patient or the second patient," I said. "Here a man is pleading with you that his wife is in great danger, and it is possible that you are the nearest doctor he could find. I believe it is your duty, as a doctor, to respond to such an emergency call without delay."

"Ha, ha!" laughed my friend, the doctor. "But you don't know the majority of people; they use you today when they need you and then forget all about you a day later—and besides I don't know this man. I never heard of him or his family before."

I looked upon my friend with amazement—my friend, one of the "most useful members of society." And I thought to myself—times do change!

### A PROBLEM SOLVED

"RACHEL, I can't understand the children of today," Solomon Rosen addressed his wife, who was peacefully knitting.

"I remember in the old country children married and they had no objection to living with their parents. I was the youngest of a family of seven, and two sons-in-law and daughters-in-law lived with my parents in a modest little home which wasn't hardly as comfortable as our seven room apartment.

"Here our son, Ben, is back from the Army and would like to marry Rosaline, whom we like very much, and all that's in the way is that they can't find a flat."

"Well, this is America, you know," Rachel answered as she kept on knitting.

Almost angrily, Rosen replied, "Everything they blame on America. I can't understand it. When I came over to this country, I peddled for two years with a pack on my back out West. I became acquainted with a number of American families out there, and the children lived with their parents even after they were married."

Peacefully knitting, Rachel came back, "I wish this were true today. Even the American people aren't the same any more. You know those beautiful mansions on the boulevard that we always see passing by in our car. Some are empty and some of the others are inhabited by the old timers. Their married children are living in hotel cubbyholes."

After a few moments of silence, Rosen asked, "Did you hint to Ben that they could possibly stay with Rosaline's parents? After all, they have a big house and they could be very comfortable over there."

"I did mention this to Ben," she explained, "but Rosaline won't even consider it. As a matter of fact I met Mrs. Baskin, our future in-law, at the Future of our World symposium, and she told me that she would be the happiest person in the world if our children married and stayed with them. She felt heartbroken when Rosaline said in a decisive manner that young people should live their own lives."

"Their own lives!" Rosen murmured. "We wouldn't interfere with them and look what's going on behind closed doors."

\* \* \*

At this moment, their son Ben entered. He looked very depressed.

"Any news about rooms?" his father inquired.

"Rosaline looked in one part of the city," Ben ex-

plained, "and I looked in another part. But it seems to me that there is nothing to be had."

Mrs. Rosen laid down her knitting needles and approached her son.

"Look here, Ben! You returned from the Army with rosy cheeks and you were the picture of health. It was a pleasure to look at you. And now you are just one half of what you were. This is because you are out late at night and you are undermining your health. I was over to the Baskins' home the other day and I noticed that Rosaline is also pale as a ghost. All on account of your stubbornness. Nu, if you don't care to stay with us, live with her folks for a while. Get married and settle down and all of us will be happy."

"It is easier said than done," Ben answered in melancholy tones.

Here, Mr. Rosen interfered. "What do you mean by easier said than done? Nothing to do? As for the wedding, this is already decided. Her people want to have it in their house and they have enough room for it. Right after the wedding, of course, if you don't care to stay with us, you can move right into their second floor and mazel tov."

At this moment the telephone rang. Ben was the first to pick up the receiver. While he listened to the voice on the other end his face was covered with a smile. A few times he said "Yes . . . yes . . . yes," and then saying, "I'll let you talk to my mother," he turned the receiver to Mrs. Rosen.

Mrs. Rosen nodded for a while too. "Yes . . . yes . . ." and then she returned to her husband, Solomon, smiling.

"Our in-law, Mrs. Baskin, God bless her, has a wonderful idea. She suggested that we move into their home

and let the young people move in here until they can find something for themselves."

\* \* \*

The Baskins and Rosens could hardly believe that Rosaline, who had never stepped into the kitchen, could prepare such a fine supper, and everything strictly kosher.

She explained that a friend of hers had given her a real Jewish cook book which she followed to a T. Of course there were a few other guests invited to the new home of the young couple who occupied the Rosens' apartment.

"Rosaline," Papa Rosen inquired, "do you mean to tell me that the Jewish Cook Book also tells how to make blintzes which taste so good?"

"It even tells how to make shabbasdige kugel," Rosaline informed her father-in-law.

At this moment, Mr. Rosen broke into a terrific cough.

"Pa," Rosaline said sympathetically, "have you got a cold? You cough very heavily."

"You call this a cough?" he said. "You should hear your father cough the whole night."

## NO WILL TO WILL

It is late in the afternoon, and the entire family—wife, sons, and daughters—are sitting in the parlor waiting for the family attorney, John Schochet, who has telephoned that he is coming within half an hour.

There is a great deal of unrest among the members of the family. The only one who is silent is the mother. The rest argue with one another.

The head of the family, Max Barsky, is in the adjacent bedroom struggling to hang on to life. Two nurses are attending him.



It was upon the advice of Dr. Jacques Slavinsky that the attorney was called, in order that his patient be able to write his last will and testament. The doctor had been a friend of the family for many years. He knew that Max Barsky, who had never had a sick day in his life, had never dreamed of writing a will. He knew that if the patient died without a will, the estate would have to be probated, and then he would have to wait a long time for the fee for his professional services.

The children knew that their dying father, who had accumulated much wealth, had many complaints against them.

He was bitter against his eldest son for marrying a poor working girl from his own factory, the daughter of a janitor. He could never forgive the other son, who on a busy day would disappear to go to the races. As for his daughter, he had very little use for her due to the fact that her cigarette smoking always choked him. He named her little nose a "smoking chimney."

While he never wrote a will, he would now and then utter a remark such as this.

"Before I die, I will provide as much as possible for my wife, Minnie, and the rest I am going to give to the Charities and to the *shul* of my *landsleit*."

The members of the family were worried about their father's intentions.

The door bell rang and all ran to open the door for Attorney John Schochet.

"How is Pa doing?" he inquired in a worried tone.

They invited him to sit down, and the older son as spokesman addressed the lawyer.

"You know our Pa, like all the old timers, could never change his ideas. We don't have to tell you how much Ma had to go through all these years to satisfy his whims and

caprices. At least we are glad to know that he always said that he would provide for Ma. But, we fear that he is going to disinherit us. So, we ask you as a friend to use your influence and do the best you can that as a father he should not forget his own."

The daughter, furiously smoking a cigarette, added her plea.

"My father may think that because I am married to a rich man, I am not entitled to anything. The truth of the matter is that my husband is far from being a millionaire. I surely hope that you will use your influence not to forget me."

The old mother dazedly kept on sighing. She was about to say something, but the younger son, controlling his anger, admonished his brother and sister.

"In the name of God! Our Dad is between life and death and you are bargaining how much money to get. We are not going to starve if he leaves all to charity. We still have a running business, and with a little more effort we can succeed just as well as Dad did. Suppose he does leave all the money to worthy causes, wouldn't it be a great honor for us? I am sure that each institution will have his name inscribed on one of those marble stones. Believe me, that won't hurt our reputation."

"A lot of fur coats you can buy with a name on a marble stone," the daughter interjected.

"You will never go without a coat," her younger brother retorted. "I still believe that your husband, Joe, is able to take care of you."

At this time, the bedroom door opened and one of the nurses stepped out. "He can still talk, but he is a very sick man."

Her information brought a ray of light to the face of the lawyer. "I better go in."

"Remember what you have to do," whispered the older son.

"Daughters in this country have as much rights as sons," supplemented the daughter, "and I am sure you will see to it that my father will not neglect me."

"Please, Mr. Schochet," pleaded the younger son, "don't aggravate Dad in his last few hours. I hope to God there is still hope for him to live. Doctors, too, make mistakes once in a while. Please don't add more pain to his last suffering hours."

\* \* \*

There is silence in the front room. Not a word is heard from the bedroom. Perhaps some of them would like to put their ears to the keyhole, but somehow or other their mother's look keeps them in their seats.

All of a sudden, they hear their father's voice screaming, "Don't you tell me what to do with my money. You are not dying. I am doing the dying!"

## MOTHER LOSES A JOB

WHEN Mrs. Rose Opp was left a widow with three young children, all who knew her sympathized with her. But no one had any fear that she would ever be in need.

In the first place, her husband, Maurice, had left a handsome amount of life insurance.

Furthermore, her friends knew that Rose Opp possessed a "commercial mind" which would help her carry on.

Their predictions were right.

Only her bank knew that she had as yet not touched the principal of her life insurance money. She was mak-

ing enough on her own to provide for herself and her children, whom she gave a fine education.

Mrs. Opp's first step was to attach herself to a real estate office. Officially she was not in the real estate business. But she had her finger in deals now and then where she received a "slice" of the commission.

The ambitious widow had a system of her own to promulgate real estate deals.

She would throw out a remark to a friend who owned property.

"The condition of real estate is uncertain. Now is the best time to sell."

She would then convey this conversation to the agent of the real estate office, who would later call on her friend to talk business.

At other occasions she would tell a friend, "If I were you, I wouldn't feed landlords with my money. Why not buy a home—a two story building, for instance? Believe me, the rent from the other flat would pay for your apartment."

This conversation, too, was reported to the real estate office.

Rose Opp, belonging to a number of auxiliaries, hit on the idea of engaging in a little matchmaking. She thought to herself, "I know a number of mothers who have daughters. I know other mothers who have sons. Why shouldn't I be the mortar to cement two bricks?"

Rose Opp did not open a matchmaking office and did not advertise that she was able to "heal wounded hearts" or "bring a soulmate to lonesome souls." Here, too, she applied the same method as in her real estate business.

After one of the auxiliary meetings, while Mrs. Opp was bidding farewell to a number of women she would approach one of the members.



"Say, I saw your daughter the other day. What a fine girl! I know a fine boy of nice parents. I believe I ought to interest myself in bringing them together. I am sure both of them and the two families would be very happy."

Certainly no mother in Israel would refuse such a proposition, particularly when her daughter had already reached the age of twenty. . . .

When the privilege of getting busy was given to Mrs. Opp she would say, "Remember! I am not a matchmaker. But pretty soon I will need a fur coat and if you should decide to make me a present of one, it will be all right."

In many cases happy parents did not buy fur coats or summer dresses. But Mrs. Opp would get a check with a note attached.

"Since we don't know the kind of coat or dress you like, please accept our check as a token of appreciation."

\* \* \*

It was a Saturday evening.

Mrs. Opp and her three grown children were busy dressing to go out. One did not know the other's destination. Each had his own interest and his own friends.

The busiest of the dressers was Mrs. Opp. While she was putting on her best attire she kept on saying, "I hope I am not late; I promised Mrs. Pincus to be at her home no later than seven o'clock, before her son, Leon, leaves the house. Is that a boy! Is that a boy! I heard him the other night speaking at the auxiliary meeting of our congregation and he won everybody's heart. Of course, I was told that men on speaking platforms are sometimes only actors and in real life they are different. This is the reason that I want to look at him. I have a girl for him that the minute he'll see her, he'll be *tsuplatst*."

While Mrs. Opp busied herself, her children were anxiously waiting to use the bathroom. Her older daughter, Miriam, a kindergarten teacher, remarked, "Mother, won't you be kind enough to let us in first? You don't have to be at Mrs. Pincus's so early. If that boy Leon is any kind of a man, he won't run out of the house so early."

From the bathroom came the mother's voice.

"I never take chances. I have a number of real estate propositions to put through during the week and I want to see Leon tonight. I got something good for him."

\* \* \*

A half hour later all were getting ready to leave when the door bell rang. Miriam was the first to run to the door. Since the Opps lived on the third floor, it took a few minutes before the visitor appeared.

It was Leon, for whom Mrs. Opp was trying to find a mate.

All were surprised, except Miriam, who spoke smilingly.

"Folks, I want you to meet my fiance. Now, ma, since you are such a practical woman, we will let you set the date for our wedding."

## MOTHERS AND SONS

ONE of the rooms in a downtown hotel was crowded.

The occasion was a reception in honor of the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Berl Berlowitch, a retired couple who were touring the country visiting landsleit and friends.

This much must be said for the Berlowitches; they had a great attachment to landsleit.

Since leaving New York they had already stopped in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh where they looked up friends whom they had not seen for a number of years—some of them not since they left the old country.

It was at this occasion that among the other landsleit Mrs. Rose Bark met Mrs. Beile Starkowsky.

While a number of the assembled were reminiscing about their childhood days in Babroisk and telling stories about their hard early immigrant days, Mrs. Bark addressed Mrs. Starkowsky.

"Beile, tell me vot's di matter mit you. My 'osband told me that your 'osband made lottsa money. You know I ain't begrudging you. My 'osband ain't such a schlemil neither. But let me hask you for vy you are still living mit the kikes. Vy dontya move ver I is living. Honest to goodness, I feel like a regular lady since I is living in the shuburbs."

"As far as I am concerned," Mrs. Starkowsky answered, unaffected, "I am very happy where I live now. Besides, I am grateful to God that I am able to take care of my husband's father, who is entitled to all the comforts in the world."

"For God's sake," Mrs. Bark screamed, "vy don't youse send the old man to an old home or something like dat? Den you and your 'osband vill be free."

"We don't look for such freedom," Mrs. Starkowsky replied sarcastically. "I am grateful for the privilege of taking care of my fine father-in-law."

\* \* \*

The next day, Mrs. Rose Bark received an invitation to attend a meeting of one of the many auxiliaries she belonged to. Her shrill voice was heard quite often at such meetings, particularly when some of the members

suggested that the organization arrange for entertainment of Jewish interest.

At such times, Mrs. Bark would strongly take issue.

"Youse peoples always vant to be old fashioned. Dontcha know dat dis is America and ve must do like real Americans? Vy don't ve get de cowboy visler or somthing like dat?"

This particular invitation somewhat intrigued her, because the speaker was to be a young man who had just returned from overseas where he had served in the Army with distinction, and later was engaged in relief work.

While the telling of experiences by men and women who had just returned from overseas was already becoming commonplace, the young man made a strong impression on the listeners.

Masterfully he described the tragic conditions in Europe, though not forgetting to bring in some humorous anecdotes which brightened up the sombre picture of the vale of tears overseas.

Mrs. Bark was touched by the speech, and she continued applauding even when the rest of the women had stopped.

There was a spontaneous rush to the speaker's stand on the part of the women to shake the young speaker's hand and to congratulate him.

Mrs. Bark was among them, and she was pleasantly surprised when the young lecturer addressed her.

"Why, Mrs. Bark, how are you? You look wonderful."

While she was anxious to ask how he knew her, the other women at the platform pushed her away.

When the turmoil had ceased, she came over to him.

"Gee, my goodness, I am so glad that youse knows me. Vy, it's a great pleasure—a fine speaker—a nice young man—to know me."



Ben Star smilingly responded, "Why, don't you remember me, Mrs. Barkowsky? You lived next door to us. You and my mother are great friends. I went to grammar school and high school with your Sammy."

"Youse means to tell me that you're Bella Starkowsky's son?"

He answered with pride, "I am very sorry my mother couldn't be here today; my grandpa had a bad night. And by the way, how is your son, Sam?"

Rose Bark lowered her head . . . She couldn't answer. . . . Last night again her Sam had come home at dawn, the aroma of alcohol reaching her nostrils.

### WANTED—A SALESMAN

WHEN Abe Robin reached the heart of "the old territory"—the neighborhood where as an immigrant he had spent his young manhood, he thought of those hard days and the lovable *unsere menshen* who had given him shelter and food.

He remembered most vividly Mendel the melamed, with whom he had stayed during the first two or three weeks after his arrival from the old country.

The house had not changed.

When Robin knocked at the door, Minna, old Mendel's daughter, met him. She was surprised to see her rich *landsman* standing there.

"Tell me, Minna," he asked, "how is father? How is your mother, that kosher soul? Are you married?"

"Thank God . . . married for five years now. My husband lost his job six months after our marriage. But thank God, now and then he finds a few days work. Thank God, Poppa and Momma are all right. They are both in the Old Home. They are very happy there. Now

they bless the good people who provided a home for their old age."

"By the way," Robin inquired hastily, "how is your younger sister, Lena?"

"Well," Minna informed him, "you know the old Jewish saying, 'God punishes those whom He loves.' Lena was married to a fine man, a painter by trade. Nu, one day he fell off the scaffold and . . . Lena was left a widow with two small children. But, thank God, the children are placed in the Orphan Home."

Robin had in mind to inquire about other members of the family. But he was by this time in no mood to make further inquiries. He feared that they would reveal more unpleasantness. He wanted to be outside where he could breathe fresh and untroubled air again.

Quickly he took out his wallet, withdrew a ten dollar bill, and placed it on the table, where Minna could see it, and prepared to leave.

"Abe, what are you doing?" Minna jumped to her feet. "You ought to know that the Mendels were never *schnorrers*! Thank God . . . we are getting along all right." And so saying she pushed the money into his reluctant hand.

When Robin passed Oransky's grocery store he could not decide whether to step in or not.

Partly on account of a distant relationship, and partly because there was activity in the store, which meant that the Oranskys were well, Robin dropped in.

"Hyman!" Mrs. Oransky called to her husband. "Take our *guter gast* right upstairs, and when I get through with the customers, I will come up too. Oi, what a *guter gast*!"

When Oransky and Robin were seated upstairs, in the same front room where Robin had sipped so many glasses of tea in years gone by, Robin spoke.

"Well, Hyman, I see you are holding your own."

"You know what they say in Yanovo," Oransky replied with a soft smile. "'Not all that glitters is gold,' but thank God and thanks to the Women's Loan Society, in another few weeks all will be well with us."

"What do you mean?" said Robin.

"It's like this," the grocer explained. "You know, our customers are small people and long on credit. Naturally, we cannot meet our bills from the wholesale grocery house. One of their wise guys came to show us how to cut down on credit. *Folg mir a gang*, tell Mrs. Barsky or Mrs. Minsk, 'No more credit.' People that were our customers when you, Abe, just came from the ship. So we couldn't cut them out. But the wholesale house cut us out. Oh, what trouble. Well, the Loan Society made us a loan. Meanwhile times are getting better, and we've started to repay a little bit each week, without interest."

\* \* \*

"Ooh! What a relief," Abe Robin said to his friend, Sol Tubin, when they met in the club. "I just came from the old neighborhood. Oh, what *tzores* they are having out there. *What tzores, what tzores!*"

After Robin had related the incidents of the day, he noticed Sol taking a small book out of his vest pocket.

"This book is not the Bible, but believe me it contains the spirit of the Bible." As he spoke he turned the pages and finally said, "Abe, I am surprised at you. I really am!"

"What's the matter?" Robin asked in surprise.

"I don't find your name listed in this book as a contributor to the Charities."

Robin said nothing. In his shame he did not know what to say.

"Do you realize," Sol reprimanded him, "that the very Old Home where the Mendels live in comfort is supported by the Charities? Yes, and Lena's orphans are being brought up and educated in a home that is likewise supported by our Charities.

"My God, Abe, do I have to tell you about the hospitals and all the other institutions which our charities support?

"You read about our children appearing in the Juvenile Court. Well, the Charities is trying to prevent even this by supporting Jewish education and also making it possible for our children to get a religious training. As a matter of fact, Abe, I could spend months telling you of the great things that the Charities do for our community, but there is no time now; the boys are waiting to get their pinochle game started."

Abe Robin took out his check book and wrote a check for the Charities. While handing it to Sol, he asked, "Tell me, Sol, how is business with you?"

"Why do you ask?" Tubin came back with a question in response to a question in the Jewish fashion.

"Well, I thought if things are not so *ai-ai-ai* with you"—Robin stammered—"I could use you as a salesman."

## EULOGY IN A HOLE

THE chapel was overcrowded with people from every walk of life.

Some walked over to the coffin in which Leo Rubin was taking his preliminary rest before being placed in his everlasting abode.

The majority of those who came to pay him his last



respects, however, took their seats without passing by the casket to see their dead friend.

Mrs. Rubin sat in the front row with her two daughters at her sides. She was gazing at her husband's remains and the daughters were gazing at her, hoping she would not break out crying.

Before they came to the chapel, they pleaded with her not to "carry on."

"This is America, not Pilvishok. Americans don't cry."

Although she promised them to try her best, when they reached the undertaking parlor, she broke into a *klog*, and it took her two daughters quite a while to quiet her.

As said before, the gathering was composed of people from every walk of life. This was because Leo Rubin as a broker, real estate dealer, buyer and seller of drug stores, attendant at auction sales, had come in contact with a variety of men.



In the office of the undertaker adjacent to the chapel, Rabbi Aaron Peretz of Congregation B'nai Emunah had a conference with the two sons of Leo Rubin. He wanted to get information from them regarding the activities of their father.

It was known to the rabbi that Rubin had not belonged to any synagogue, and he had come to conduct the funeral services at the request of a brother-in-law of the Rubin family who was a member of his congregation.

He asked the boys, "Did your father belong to any Jewish organizations?"

"Our father belonged to the Jewish Get-Together Club and to the Jewish Link-Together Golf Club."

"Did your father belong to any charitable groups?" the rabbi inquired again.

To this the boys again had no answer.

As Rabbi Peretz appeared in the pulpit, everyone was impressed that he was going to offer a touching eulogy. He did.

Rabbi Peretz dwelled upon our three forefathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He explained the particular virtues of each one of them.

"We are told that the greatness of Abraham was his hospitality. In the heat of the day he would sit in front of his tent and invite strangers to relieve their hunger and to quiet their thirst.

"His grandson, Jacob, was a scholar who spent his time studying the Law of God. But Abraham's son, Isaac, communed with his God in the fields under the canopy of heaven. Isaac was inspired by the green grass and the clear-blue sky. Our departed, Leo Rubin, can be compared to our father Isaac. He joined a golf club in order to enjoy the velvet green grass; to breathe the fresh air given by God to every being. Of course, the balls that our dead brother hit into the golf holes were taken out. But alas, the hole into which he will now be placed will be his resting place forever."

Here the widow started to scream with all her might. With the help of her two sons she was again pacified.

And the rabbi continued.

"But the spirit of Leo Rubin will live on. The deeds that he accomplished will be an example to all of those with whom he came in contact. May his memory be a blessing. God has given and God has taken away. Blessed be His name for ever and ever."



Joe Biskin and Morris Dishkin, in one of the automobiles in the funeral procession, were hotly discussing the rabbi's sermon.

"It was wonderful," Joe said, "how the rabbi compared Leo to our father Isaac."

"Well," Morris remarked, "I am glad that when the rabbi was discussing the golf holes he didn't know of all the people that Leo Rubin had put in a hole with his business transactions."

### A STRUDEL QUEEN

WHEN Anna Moskow was introduced to Rabbi Falk, who knew her husband in the old days as Moskowitz, in a summer resort near Chicago, the rabbi jokingly inquired, "Mrs. Moskow, when did you lose your 'witch?' "

Mrs. Moskow was not a bit embarrassed, for her good nature had overcome harder knocks.

For many years, she had been behind the counter of her husband's dry goods store. In this way, she had helped and cooperated from the day she was married.

Most of the customers were of the type who brought with them from Europe the habit of bargaining and haggling over prices. Very often she pacified a customer by offering him a piece of strudel.

Here it is worthwhile to mention that the making of the strudel occupied her until late at night. Her art of making delicious strudel was not only known to her immediate family and friends, but a great number of Jews and non-Jews in the neighborhood enjoyed her palatable delicacy.

When Rabbi Falk remarked to Mrs. Moskow that although this was a fine Jewish resort serving delicious food, he would be pleased to see some strudel like the

kind he had eaten in Mrs. Moskow's house, she was flattered. As a matter of fact, the previous remark of the rabbi was forgotten.

Fate was kind to the Moskows and they became wealthy.

Mrs. Moskow was fortunate enough to have the proper help in her household. This gave her a chance to belong to as many auxiliaries as she was invited to join. Of course, her business training was a great help to some of the auxiliaries in a practical way, but her making of strudel became popular in all the auxiliaries.

She gave her time to visiting members who were bed-ridden in hospitals. She did not neglect to bring strudel.

Of course, the nurses were not forgotten by Mrs. Moskow. They too enjoyed this homemade pastry. Only in one instance, a conservative nurse prevented Mrs. Moskow from bringing strudel to a patient.

"It is too heavy," the nurse explained.

"Will you eat it?" Mrs. Moskow inquired.

"I should say so," the nurse answered.

And so the strudel was absorbed in the hospital just the same.

Unknown to Mrs. Moskow herself, a certain yearning crept into her mind. It was a desire to be a patient in a hospital. Of course, she did not want to go through painful experiences. She admired the beautiful kimonos her sick friends wore. She too wanted to have the experience of having visitors with smiling faces to see her. The courtesy of the internes and the tenderness of the nurses enchanted her.

So, one beautiful morning, she called up her family physician, Dr. Leon Bank, complaining that she was not feeling well.



Dr. Bank always felt that nothing serious could happen in the strong, healthy family of the Moskovs, except as a result of Mr. Moskov's overweight which was caused by eating too much strudel and other fattening foods. As for Mrs. Moskov, she was a specimen of health and vigor. Her face did not show the number of winters and summers she had spent on this earth.

Dr. Bank came over. He found his tentative patient resting in bed wearing a beautiful kimono.

He gave her a thorough examination and pronounced her perfectly healthy.

"You are just a little tired. Stay in bed until tomorrow morning. You will be all right."

"No prescription?" she inquired.

"No need for any medicine," he answered.

He picked up his satchel and left the house.

That good-hearted soul, Mrs. Moskov, could not control her anger. She picked up the telephone and called her best friend, Becky.

"The ideal!" she screamed. "Here I am sick and my doctor tells me I am well. I think it is time for a change. I ought to get a doctor who knows his business."

It is not known what Becky had to say on the other end of the line. All we know is that Mrs. Moskov kept on agreeing, saying, "Yes . . . yes . . . yes."

Two hours later, Doctor John Williamson was at her bedside. After looking her over in a polite manner, he explained her case.

"Mrs. Moskov, there is nothing the matter with you. Your pulse is normal and you have no temperature. In these days when we have such a shortage of doctors, there is no reason for you to spend money."

"Why," Mrs. Moskov exclaimed in a most disap-

pointed tone, "for my money I can afford to have even *double* pneumonia."

## LONESOME

IT WAS Friday night.

When the Oppenheims came from Germany at the end of the last century, they brought with them the love of Jewish tradition and Jewish life that they had absorbed in the home of their pious parents in Frankfurt-on-Main. This reservoir of Jewish spirituality stayed with them all their years in this country.

In a word, the Oppenheimer home was permeated with genuine Jewishness. This was true even though they were surrounded by a great number of friends who were affected by assimilation and Jewish deterioration.

This Friday night was the most holy and cheerful Sabbath eve they had had for many a year. There was a good reason for their joy. Their son, Elmer, had returned from the Army. His four years' service in the Pacific had not affected his health. For the few days since he had come back, Mrs. Oppenheimer was telephoning her numerous friends, repeating this sentence.

"Thank God. Elmer returned as wholesome and as sweet as he left us."



The first night when Elmer retired in his own bed, in which he had not slept for almost four years, Mrs. Oppenheimer was almost tempted to suggest that they say together the night prayer she had taught him when he was a child. . . . But something held her back.

She was mindful of the fact that the years spent at the

university and his association with "intellectuals" had somewhat diminished his beliefs and religious faith.

Of course, she reminded herself of the letters that Elmer had written from the Pacific in which he told of the many Sabbath eves he attended services and listened to the Jewish chaplain. As a matter of fact, in one letter he stated that he even joined the choir and sang "Lecha Dodi" with them.

However, she offered a silent prayer herself. If there were tears in her eyes, they were tears of joy; for Elmer was in his own bed. . . .

The Oppenheims intended to invite a number of their friends for this Friday night. But Elmer objected. He had met all of them during the week and he would like to spend one night alone with his father and mother.

While Mrs. Oppenheimer offered her prayer over the candles, placing her hands over her eyes, she noticed the attentive look on Elmer's face. This was different from the way he used to watch his mother bless the Sabbath lights before he left for the Army. At that time, he considered it a "waste of time." At this moment it seemed that he was interested and touched. . . .

It pleased her.

At the table, Elmer complimented his mother on the gefilte fish. It was something he had not eaten for a long time. Except once on Guadalcanal where a Jewish soldier, who was a good cook, had prepared gefilte fish for his Jewish buddies. It was so good that the Irish soldiers partook of this Jewish traditional food also. Some of the Catholic boys had another reason for eating fish on Friday.

Towards the end of the meal, Father Oppenheimer spoke to his son.

"Well, Elmer, mother and I will be very proud if you

would go with us to temple tonight. I am sure our rabbi will offer a special blessing for you. Our friends will be more than happy to greet you."

"I am a little tired," Elmer answered. "I would rather stay at home, rest, and read the papers."

There was a pause, and disappointment could be read on the faces of the parents.

"Well," the father said in an apologetic way, "you wrote to us a number of times that you attended services while being away from home. I thought you might like to go with us to temple. Of course, if you want to rest, we will pray for you."

Elmer replied apologetically.

"You see, folks, you don't know what it means to be on a God-forsaken island somewhere in the Pacific. You crave to be with your own. . . . You are *lonesome*."

"Aha!" said the father, "you've touched the real point. In your absence we too were lonesome. The millions of people around us did not mean anything. We were lonesome only for one person—you. It was in the temple when he prayed for you that we felt as if you were with us."

As Mr. and Mrs. Oppenheimer were about to leave the house they noticed that Elmer was also putting on his coat.

"Don't stay out too late," his father pleaded with him. "I hope you will be home when we return."

"We will all return together," Elmer said. "I am going with you."

## THE LAST RUB

It was early Friday morning and Moishe Babroisk entered the Russian-Turkish Bath House owned by Nathan



Paravik. He had worked in the bath house as attendant for the last thirty-five years. He kissed the *mezuzah*, wiped his watery eyes, and sat in a chair to rest.

He could hardly believe that this was his last day at the place where he had labored all these long years. During this long period he had attended thousands of Jews, once in a while a few non-Jews, who came to refresh themselves with the stream and heat of the bath.

Only a few days ago, he had had occasion to attend a funeral and go to the cemetery where he read a number of familiar names on the tombstones. Some of those who rested under the stones appeared so vividly to him that he could almost visualize having them on the bench, soaping them, washing them, and getting a big tip.

He gazed at the empty walls from which the paint was coming off, since the owner, Paravik, did not care to make repairs in view of the fact that he had planned to close up the establishment.

Of the many incidents he had experienced during his long tenure, he was reminded of the terrible thing that happened about twenty-five years before when the bath house had been turned into a human slaughterhouse.

After the first World War, a number of White Russians came over to America. The great majority of them worked in the iron yards and rag shops. On Saturday night these Slavs would visit this bath house. The majority of them were drunk and would continually shout.

"We ought to kill the Jews here the same way we did in Russia under Petlura! That's what we ought to do—kill the Jews!"

Moishe Babroisk, who had lost several relatives in that country at the hands of the White Russians, would shiver with indignation. Many a time when he had them on his bench to soap and scrub, he felt like putting his hands

around their necks and choking them. But he knew that this would not please the owner, to whom business was business.

It happened on one occasion that a gang of White Russians piled in with the same raucous thundering: "Kill the Jews! Kill the Jews!"

At that time there were a few Jewish boys in the steam room, and when they heard this they came out with the wooden pails and beat up the drunken Slavs. Since they were drunk, a few of them fell on the cement floor unconscious.

Babroisk was frightened and began to shout, "Gevald! Gevald!"

When the police came, they had a hard job getting the fighters dressed, so that they could put them in the two police wagons waiting to take them to the station and the hospital.

Babroisk was the main witness the next morning in court. He swelled with joy when he saw his former customers beaten up. The judge admonished them, "Not enough that you spend all your money in the saloons instead of bringing it home to your wives and children, but you are using language which does not belong in this country."

The Jewish boys were reprimanded; and with this the story was closed.

Babroisk remembered how surprised he was when weeks later the very same White Russians came back to the bath house calm and gentle as lambs.

He also recalled making five hundred dollars in a real estate deal. While attending a customer on the wooden bench who pleaded to be rubbed more with the *bezim* on the back, he heard two other customers who were being rubbed down on another bench discussing

a real estate deal. He heard how they were planning to inveigle a man who gave big tips to Babroisk.

He turned around and spoke to them.

"I heard what you are going to do to a friend of mine. I am going to tell him all about it. He is the best man in the world. He gives me the biggest tips and he is a charitable man to everybody."

The two real estate men called for him in the dressing room where they made a deal and gave him five hundred dollars not to reveal their project.

It must be said that Moishe had a heavy heart for months after the business transaction. However, he felt much better after *Yom Kippur* when he said *Al Chet* and offered a special prayer that God forgive him for betraying a friend.

While he was reminiscing, the collector for the Talmud Torah, Zalman Trask, who visited him every Friday to collect the nickel for his weekly dues, came in.

Moishe was glad to see him. He wanted someone to be with him at this time.

"Look," he said to the newcomer, "I spent almost my whole life at this place and tomorrow at this time it will be closed. All the people have moved away. The *mikvah* was closed long ago. Of course, my wife and I saved a little bit and will do the best we can. But it will be very lonesome."

The collector was silent.

"By the way," the former attendant said, "there is still a little hot water left. How about giving you a rub-down *I'kavod Shabbas*. You are the only one here. Next week you will have to come to my home to collect the Talmud Torah dues."

As Moishe was swinging his hands over the slim body of the Talmud Torah collector stretched on the wooden bench, he philosophized.

"There is an end to everything. During my life, I washed and scrubbed all kinds of people. Some of them were really nice. Oh yes, I also remember those who will not enjoy the pleasant heat and steam that they had here, when they are washed and scrubbed in Hell."

### DEFENDING HIS PEOPLE

IT is Friday night.

Once again Peter Riley, known to the members of Congregation "Tree of Life" merely as "Pete," turns off the lights in the congregation and places himself in one of the front seats to meditate before the perpetual light over the ark.

It is over ten years since Pete became the janitor of this congregation. As a matter of fact, his official title is now caretaker.

Not only does he know all of the members of the congregation, but he also knows most of the children who come to the Sabbath School.

He and his wife, Maggie, will never forget the time when their child, Catherine, was sick and how the women of the Sisterhood took such a deep interest. The Sabbath School children brought flowers and candy.

This time again, Riley is reminded of his childhood days and how hard it was for him to part from his parents, who lived on a poor farm, in order to make something of himself in the big city.

With his limited education, he could not go very far. Nevertheless, he is happy in his present position as



caretaker of the congregation. He is fond of the rabbi who is always kind and good to him; and all in all, he feels that he is one of the congregation.

Friday night, when the worshippers part after the services, a number greet Pete as they leave.

All the traditional synagogue melodies are familiar to Pete, and when he stands in the hallway he can be heard humming "En Kelohenu."

After sitting for a while and meditating, he notices a number of prayerbooks on the seats, which he takes up reverently, placing them in the shelves at the doors.



"Hi, there," a fellow janitor greets Pete from across the street, "how about a glass of beer? I have had an awful day trying to satisfy a number of cranky tenants, and it's getting worse every day since the Jews moved into this neighborhood."

"Look here," Pete says resentfully, "If you want me to have a glass of beer with you, you will have to stop talking about the Jews."

"O.k., o.k.," his friend reluctantly agrees. "I almost forgot that you are almost a Jew yourself."

Since Friday is also a busy day for Pete, he joins the other janitor in drinking one glass of beer after another. When both feel heavy on their feet, his friend, forgetting his promise, blurts out, "Look here, Pete! Darn it, I can't understand it. Scarcity of men all over. Why, there are good jobs by the thousands, and I can't understand why in the hell you hang on to those darn Jews."

For a while Pete does not answer. He is holding a glass of beer in one hand and one can notice the anger in his face. All of a sudden, he throws the beer glass in the face of

his companion. Then he hurls him on the floor and kicks him with all his might. The fight lasts until the police arrive.

\* \* \*

While the other janitor has to engage a lawyer, Pete is escorted to the bar of justice by a prominent attorney who is a member of the congregation.

"Why did you hit your friend?" the judge demands of Pete, who is himself sporting a black eye.

"He insulted my people," Pete answers angrily.

"Your people?" the judge inquires, appraising Pete's outstanding Irish face. "Why, I understand you are only the janitor there."

"Yes, your honor," Pete replies with more courage. "They are good to me and kind to my family."

"Ten dollars and cost for disorderly conduct," the judge decrees.

The Congregation "Tree of Life" pays the fine.

## THE AWAKENING

It was late in the evening when attorney Samuel Resnik, who had recently returned from overseas, entered his five room apartment.

He was careful in turning the key not to disturb his wife and three year old baby girl who were fast asleep. Tiptoeing, he looked into the bedroom where his wife Miriam was slumbering soundly, and then into the room where his little daughter was dreaming of the angels.

He paced up and down the floor in the frontroom deep in thought. He threw himself in an easy chair next to the piano, over which there was a dim light. He picked

up the new book "Peace of Mind" by Rabbi Joshua Liebman, lying on the piano stool, which his wife was reading.

The book did not succeed in giving him peace of mind.

Resnik had a heavy heart. His experiences this evening had placed him in a most difficult position, and he concentrated with all his mind on how to get out.

\* \* \*

In the afternoon he had collected a substantial fee—the first of such size since he had assumed law practice again after returning from the Army. With this fee he could pay his rent; buy his wife some new summer clothes; and doll up their baby. Unfortunately, as he sat in the comfortable chair, he was neither comfortable nor happy, because his pockets were empty.

A friend of his had invited him for the evening to the club for dinner, with the suggestion that he was going to introduce him to influential friends. Resnik, lonesome for his wife and daughter, hesitated. But when he called his wife and she urged him to go in order to make some "contacts," he accepted the invitation.

While he was having dinner with his friend, he observed the great number of guests, some of whom he knew well. Some were not known to him. But he realized that they had not been born with silver spoons in their mouths. Years of toil and labor were expressed on their faces, notwithstanding their rich apparel.

After dinner, his friend suggested that they visit the floor where the members played cards. While he hesitated, his friend said, "The question is not whether you will win or lose a dollar. The main thing is that you make contacts with prominent businessmen who can help you in your law business."

When Resnik explained that he was not a great card player, his friend returned, "Never mind; I have confidence in you. After all, rising from a private to a major in the Army and with your legal mind, you will catch on quickly and you will be one of the boys. And besides, all of those who play cards in the club are not real gamblers. For them it is merely a social game."

It did not take long for Sam Resnik to find that it was far from being a mere "social game."

The intensity of the players; their wrinkled foreheads; the nervous anxiety; the blood in the eyes of participants, reminded Resnik of the jungle from which he had just returned.

But he was in the game. For him it was an expensive game. Not only did he lose every dollar he had with him, but he now had to meet additional debts of honor.

He was sure that his wife would not ask for anything. But how could he explain not having any money to give her?

Of all the men in the card room, he would never forget one playing the role of a benefactor in the community. He would always remember how crude and brutal he was to his card partners; the obscene names he called them; his cynical expression when fate was with him; and his brutal satisfaction when he had a good hand.

As to the idea of making contacts, it sounded to Resnik like a hollow mockery.

\* \* \*

What happened after the game?

The winners left the room like conquerors. They had no time to speak to anybody.

As to the losers, a psychologist could read many ex-



pressions in their faces. One face seemed to say, "You just wait, fellows; I will get even with you in the next game." Others were so depressed and morose that they appeared to be part of a cemetery although still breathing.

Resnik tried to explain the puzzling fact that during the three years spent in the Army, where card playing is widespread, he had never participated in any game; and now he had fallen a victim to gambling. . . .

Long into the night, Resnik was calculating how to meet his darling wife and his baby, until he fell into a heavy sleep in the comfortable chair.

When Miriam Resnik arose in the morning to take care of her baby, she was alarmed not to find her Samuel in the bedroom.

The few moments it took her to go from the bedroom to the frontroom seemed like thousands of years. . . . She was shocked to find him sleeping in the comfortable chair with head resting on his breast.

When she woke him up, he embraced her. She looked into his eyes where she read sorrow.

But she did not ask.

## MY PEOPLE I

### I

#### FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE

"CHICAGO is *not* New York! I rented you the rooms, but not my sidewalk to sell soda-water on. You just watch; I'll go to the city hall and send a policeman."

So stormed Mendel Garbov, owner of property in a well known Chicago district where the "voice of Jacob" is anything but rare.

And from his viewpoint, as a landlord, he had reason to complain. A couple of weeks previously he had rented the ground floor apartment to Barney Levy, whose family could have used the second floor as well. And now Barney Levy, without asking his permission, had put up a soda-water stand at the very entrance of the house.

"What does it hurt you if I make a little money from the stand?" Levy pleaded. "Haven't you got a Yiddishe heart?"

"Take down the stand and that's all!" the landlord demanded. "I didn't rent you the sidewalk—understand?"

From among the crowd which had congregated to hear the argument, an elderly Jew with a sly twinkle in his eye stepped forth, and, taking a quarter out of his pocket, turned to Garbov with the following argument.

"Mr. Garbov, your present quarrel with your tenant over the stand reminds me that fourteen years ago I drank a great deal of soda-water at your stand—that was when we were both New Yorkers. As I remember I still owe you a few cents. And another thing. I remember the trouble you had with your landlord. You suffered plenty because of him!"

Garbov stopped to ponder for a moment and a mellow expression came over his face.

"Is that you, Simkin? Where have you been all these years? How good it is to see old friends!"

"Well," said Simkin, "can't we patronize your tenant while we talk?"

So the old friends drank cold soda-water at Levy's stand. They joyously reminisced over the "green days" in New York. And to top things off, Garbov even paid for the soda-water which the passing policeman drank.

## II

## THE PRISONER

He stands behind iron bars, dressed like the other prisoners in overalls of blue denim. His wife stands on the other side of the bars with their three children, ranging from ten to fifteen years of age.

"The president of our shul and a couple of members, good friends of yours, Bender and Minsky, wanted to call on you," she says, "but I wouldn't let them. It's only ten more days until you will be home again, a free man."

He is silent.

"What?" she says in amazement. "They have monkeyed with your beard?"

"They wanted to cut off my beard entirely," he replies in a subdued voice, "but I pleaded with them to only cut off half."

The three children stand there half frightened, half awed by the idea of their father being a prisoner.

"Time's up!" cries the guard.

The prisoner disappears down the long corridor. She and the children remain standing in their places.

"Why is your husband in prison?" asks a woman who has come to call on her own husband.

"I don't understand it myself. It all happened so quick. My husband and I had a little quarrel. Well, he forgot himself and hit me. You know such things happen. But we would have made up and all would have been well again, if our neighbor, Mrs. Rosenberg, hadn't mixed in. Can you imagine, she gets busy, and calls up one of those swell ladies, who comes over with a policeman! They arrest my husband and now he is in jail for thirty

days. Woe to me that my children should have a criminal for a father. Did you ever hear of such a thing?"

"Tut-tut-tut," the other woman remarks by way of consolation. "The men deserve it all. But I did better than that. I did the hitting, and instead of thirty days my husband got two months. It's all right, let them have a rest."

She starts home with the children, mumbling to herself, "Ten more days, ten more days."

### III

#### AN EXPENSIVE CORPSE

The house is packed. There is even a big crowd on the sidewalk in front; everyone is discussing the why and wherefore of the rich Louis Lustman's death. A day ago he breathed his last in a hospital and has now been brought home for the funeral.

"As I understand it, he died in his office just as he was about to close a deal," remarks one fellow.

"He always had a weak heart," declares another authoritatively, "and the doctor had warned him to avoid all excitement."

Sam Ravut, the real estate man who never misses an opportunity to boost his holdings, explains Lustman's death in this way.

"None of you seem to know the truth of the matter. He had a weak heart, but had his profits been normal, he could have gone on and on and lived many years yet. But it seems that everything he touched turned to gold. And finally, when it looked like his T&T stock was going to jump ten points, the excitement killed him!"



"Yes, yes," philosophizes yet another fellow, "that's the end of it all. They fly too high, then it's six feet under."

"Here comes the undertaker," several call out.

Hyman Kolvin, the well known undertaker, joins the group, but this time he is more serious than ever.

"It is apparent that the death of Louis Lustman has affected even you, Mr. Kolvin," someone volunteers.

"We undertakers are not affected by such things," replies Kolvin, "unless we are taken advantage of!"

Everyone wonders what he can mean.

"And I mean this," continues the undertaker. "His family ordered the most expensive funeral and the highest priced casket, but I'll be switched if I know who is going to pay for it all!"

"No!" they gasp in amazement.

"Don't tell me 'no,'" Kolvin says with an ironic grin. "The old bird has left his family penniless. Why, even the clothes he died in belong to someone else!"

## MY PEOPLE II

### I

#### UNITY IN ISRAEL

MOVING from Barber Street to Port Place was for the Grabovsky family like crawling out of the darkness into light. Port Place has no grassy lawns or beds of flowers, but at least one could breathe freely there. And the peace and quiet of the neighborhood gave one's nerves a rest.

One day when Grabovsky came home from work he stopped in front of his house dumbfounded. A junk dealer had moved in next door. In the morning the side-

walk had been clean and there wasn't a rag picker's wagon in sight. Now he could hardly cross the street because of the many wagons.

"You have found the right place," Grabovsky called out to Barsky the junk dealer. "Tomorrow I will start a petition among the neighbors and we will get rid of you. It's a crime to come into such a clean and quiet neighborhood and make a pig pen out of it with a lot of junk."

Barsky understood that Grabovsky was a determined trouble maker, and that he would really arouse the neighbors and raise a row. So that very evening while Grabovsky and his family were at the supper table, Barsky called on them.

"Mr. Grabovsky," the caller said, "I would like to interest you in a business proposition. First of all, I would like to buy your house because I need more room for my junk yard. And secondly, I am looking for a partner. I am beginning to realize that the rag business is going to be wonderful on this street."

A couple of days later the deal was closed.

Grabovsky and Barsky are now doing a rushing business in Port Place, and the neighborhood is virtually stifled with dirt and dust.

## II

### A DESIRED DELAY

The car speeds and he looks out into the street to see the numbers on the houses; another block and he'll be at the house. His heart palpitates rapidly. This will be the first child he has ever circumcised. He has told the parents of the baby that he is a practiced mohel.

Circumstances have compelled him to tell a lie . . .

only yesterday he received the last lesson on circumcision.

"How will I succeed in performing such an operation the first time? It is dangerous."

Such are the thoughts which buzz in his head. And the car rushes rapidly. It is already several numbers past the house of his destination.

"Well, I should worry. I'll walk a few blocks. That will give me extra time to quiet my nerves."

As he enters the house, the father of the child meets him and declares, "The mother is ill and the baby is weak. We have decided to put off the circumcision another week."

The mohel feels as if a heavy stone has been lifted from his heart.

### III

#### STYLISH SOUP

Mrs. Goodman had heard a great deal of talk about typists. So when her husband hired a typist for his office, she became still more curious.

She discovered that a typist turns out letters with a sort of mechanical "macharayke" instead of writing them out in longhand.

She became uneasy when she heard that bosses often get very friendly with their typists, but her fears knew no bounds when her husband began to complain that she wasn't keeping up to date. He even said she walked around looking like a "yente" and acted old-stylish.

"I will have to watch my man very closely," she thought. "It won't hurt if I make an unexpected call on him in his office now and then. Let him know that I'm still alive; that I haven't died yet."

One afternoon, Mrs. Goodman came to the office.

Her husband's private office was closed. She didn't want to rush in, but she could see nothing through the frosted glass.

"They're laughing in there, they're kissing," she mumbled to herself, as she trembled, half in fear and half in rage. Her face flared up. Her heart beat fast, and highly excited, she opened the door.

Her husband, seated on a chair, was conversing with their daughter. Both were startled by the sudden interruption. Mrs. Goodman, embarrassed, didn't know how to break the silence.

"What is wrong, what's the matter with you?" her husband asked.

In confusion and ashamed of herself, she blurted out, "Why . . . I . . . came to tell you . . . why . . . I have for tonight's supper a stylish soup . . . it's barley with mushrooms in it!"

## A NIGHT ON THE ROOF

(Memories of Early Immigrant Days)

To TELL the truth I didn't have much of a desire to go out on the roof to sleep. But the little fellows wouldn't let me rest. I struggled and fought with them but they finally conquered.

I knew all the tenants and I found them on the roof.

It was yet quite early. Many sat huddled together like a band of gypsies, humming popular ditties. Others were already lying stretched out and yawning in an effort to fall asleep.

I lay down near the chimney, where clothes, hanging to dry, enshrouded me. I wanted to be by myself. I wanted to look intently at the moon and ask for a greeting from those far-off fields of green grass, from the



crystal clear little stream—whether or not it still ran and foamed as of yore—from those broad valleys and high hills. I wanted to ask it here on the roof where tin and bricks served as bedding.

On the roof things grew lively. Gay lads hilariously sang a well known melody, and then had a good laugh over it. Women applauded and called for an encore; and my sad thoughts faded away.

"Hey, gang, go to sleep! It's past time already. You are all workingmen, as I live," a hoarse voice pleaded.

"Hey, Jack! You don't have to get up in the morning!" cried another voice.

"It's little joy I have. I wish I did have to get up," Jack responded. "My mother asks for money, but there isn't any to send. Yes, it's no joy not to have work in Columbus's *medinah*."

"Now there's a faithful child for you; he doesn't forget his mother," Mrs. Ginsberg called out earnestly. "Take an example from him, you scoundrels! You are *Socialisten*. You are traefnackes, bums and tramps, and forget your fathers, mothers; and even to say a Jewish word you forget; but Jake is really a faithful boy. He doesn't forget his mother. May God help him for that!"

"Gang, who will recite *Kaddish* to close Mrs. Ginsberg's sermon?" someone cried out.

Robert Levy, a young customer peddler, who prided himself on his black moustache and fancy spectacles, suddenly interrupted.

"Mr. Poopkinson! Did you hear what happened in the house next door? A child, a *mamzer* of thirteen, wanted to stab his father."

"When? Today? In the next house?" several voices called out.

"Yes, today! And not into the house did he attempt to stick his knife, but into his father's throat."

"At such a thing, my friends, there is but little to laugh," Poopkinson, a respected man of fifty, replied. "Yes, my friends," he added calmly, "when we hear such news, one feels an aching in the heart. A Jewish child should be so savage! Stab his own father! It is terrible! Did you ever hear of such a thing in the old country? So far as I can remember, it never happened. I tell you the truth—freedom makes children wild. I say it to the children only, because for the grown people freedom is a blessing. Our fathers in America are too busy to watch over their children as they do in the old country."

"May I have such a year! Mr. Poopkinson is right," the tired voice of a woman was heard. "Children here are really little devils. Listen to a story: This very week as I was walking along I noticed a well wrapped package lying on the ground. I was holding my child by the hand. Just the same I bent down to pick up the package. When I brought it home, guess what I found!"

"A pair of old pants!" cried one.

"A dead cat!" said another.

"A portion of what Haman received from his wife," Levy's voice was recognized.

"You're way off! None of you will guess. Just listen; a pair of uppers from Russian boots, and an old country bonnet."

The roof resounded with laughter.

"Gang, as I live, let's have an end to this noise! I beg you, have pity and quit yelling. It's time to sleep!"

"Mr. Kaplock is right," Poopkinson agreed. "It is really time to sleep."

"Let Jake sing the song he gave us last night and that'll be enough," one suggested.

"Sure, sure, go ahead! go ahead!" everyone joined in.

Jake sang a sad, old time song, and all applauded.

Gradually it drew quieter and quieter on the roof, until finally not a voice was heard.

\* \* \*

But in my heart a storm broke loose. How many hearts longed and ached for this handful of people breathing so heavily here? How many fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, were worrying about their dear loved ones, who have wandered so far from them? How far these people were from nature, beautiful nature! Still more such thoughts churned in my tired brain till finally I fell into a deep sleep.

\* \* \*

A fierce downpour of rain awoke us all in the middle of the night. Each one grabbed his cushion and rushed to his room. Everyone got away safely save Jack, who slipped and broke a leg.

Fortunately, he was out of work; so he didn't have to get up!

## THE QUEEN'S COSTUME

NINE year old Charlotte returned from Sabbath School when her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Link, were about to sit down to dinner.

"Pa, Ma," she announced excitedly, "I was picked by my teacher to be Queen Esther in our Purim play. Ma, I'll have to have a costume, and I know you know how to do it."

"Yes," Father Link admitted, "there was a time when your Ma could do a lot of useful things. Now she is busy with . . ."

"Ah, you are starting in again," Mrs. Link retorted. "Can I help it if we are surrounded with people who drag you here and pull you there? You know as well as I do that I wouldn't even associate with some of the bunch if it didn't help your business."

Little Charlotte turned her sweet face, covered with gloom, to her Pa and Ma.

"I ain't worried. I know you will find time to make me a Queen Esther costume."

There was silence during the meal and the beaming face of Charlotte brought peace to both her parents.

"I remember when you were very handy with the needle," Mr. Link remarked, breaking the silence.

To which she answered crisply.

"First he gives me the needle and then he reminds me that I used to be handy with it."

Deeper gloom settled over the sweet face of Charlotte.

When Mr. Link returned from his business early the next day he found his wife exhausted.

"Aren't you feeling well?" he asked.

She replied with a sigh, "I am all in. I covered miles visiting places to get a costume for Charlotte. But none of them have her size. When I asked if they could make one to order they explained they had no material or help. Here I promised Charlotte that I would get it for her and I can't do it myself. Tomorrow I have to attend the luncheon of the Mothers Club. The next day, I have to spend the whole afternoon in the beauty parlor. So I am occupied until the end of the week."

"Can't you postpone your beauty parlor visit for some other time?" her husband inquired.



"Heh, heh," she laughed, "what do men know about such things! It took me a week to get an appointment and I am not going to cancel it now!"

"Suppose I told you," her husband replied in a sarcastic sing-song, "that you are beautiful enough for me, and you don't have to go to the beauty parlor. In fact, you will be more beautiful if you scrape together a few pieces of cloth and some trimming and make that costume for Charlotte."

\* \* \*

Never before had Charlotte returned from public school with so much joy.

"Pa, Ma!" she exclaimed breathlessly, "you have nothing to worry about. I have a Queen Esther costume, and, oh, is it beautiful!"

Both looked at her with surprise.

"Where did you get it?" they asked.

"You know Mrs. Johnson from next door," Charlotte explained. "She was at a parent-teacher meeting at school this afternoon, and I met her at the door. I told her that I was picked to be Queen Esther in our Purim play at the Sabbath school. And just imagine how happy I was when she told me that she had a costume for Queen Esther that she made for her daughter, Mary, who played Esther when she was a little girl at a church pageant.

"I was just over to Mrs. Johnson's house and she tried the costume on me. It looks just gorgeous. She said she'll have to take it in a little at the waist and she'll bring it over tomorrow."

Mr. and Mrs. Link looked at each other in amazement, and said nothing.

\* \* \*

The auditorium of Congregation Beth Aaron was overcrowded. The Friday night before, the rabbi had appealed to the members that they all come to encourage the children.

Each child played his part like a real actor. Their motions and ringing voices stirred the audience—particularly those parents whose children took part in the play.

The strongest applause was heard when little Charlotte in her queenly attire raised her little hand and cried, in a ringing voice, "If I perish, I perish!"

Very few in the audience noticed the hands of Mr. and Mrs. Johnson who had come to watch the play. They applauded little Charlotte most because she reminded them so much of their daughter Mary, when she was a little girl. Now, she was overseas nursing our wounded boys.

### BLINTZES HAVE NO CREED!

RUDOLPH SCHNUK lives in the "nice neighborhood," the part of town in which the children of Israel are just beginning to settle and in so doing indicate that they can get along with other people in a friendly, tolerant sort of way. Mr. Schnuk is very popular in his neighborhood.

As a matter of fact, when two of his gentile neighbors complimented him just the other day on the manner in which he keeps the lawn in front of his place, he felt that he had made no small contribution to the solution of the Jewish problem. He had, one might say, redeemed his people.

Mr. Schnuk is active in the Good Will Movement and he can make an earnest and pungent statement of the

fine work he does to create "a better understanding" between Jew and gentile.

He seldom attends the Sabbath services at his synagogue on Friday nights, but he manages to see to it that his congregation frequently plays the role of host to the Good Will workers. On such occasions, be it a banquet, a forum, or an address, his activity makes him one of the prominent persons present. He feels himself to be a Moses, leading his people out of the misunderstanding of Egypt toward the Torah of tolerance at Sinai.

But this much must be said to his credit: the affairs which he arranges are models of order and decorum, and no Jew who attends need fear that anything will be said or done which will tend to embarrass him before the gentiles present.

For example, Schnuk is mindful of the fact that his rabbi is not what one would call a great orator and that he always gives his remarks a distinctly Jewish touch. Therefore Schnuk so arranges things that greetings and remarks on behalf of the congregation are made by Morris Calles, the lawyer, who is one of the pillars of the congregation, and has an attractive flow of language.

Further, Mr. Schnuk always senses the question which he knows hovers on the lips of his fellow Israelites when an affair at the synagogue is over, and he reassures them by saying, "Have a little patience, boys! Soon, aber very soon, we will all be invited to the Church for a banquet."

Mrs. Schnuk is very proud of her husband. After all, to be a Jew and to be so prominent and respected in a neighborhood that is largely gentile is no small distinction. Her Rudolph occupies this enviable status and it makes her happy.

Every night Mr. Schnuk tells her about his conversation with the "goyim" on the elevated, coming home

from the office. This one has asked him his opinion about another World War. That one wants to know if Hitler was really as bad as he was painted. Is real estate coming back? Will Roosevelt run for a fourth term? They all want his opinion and value it just as though he were one of them.

"And you know," he tells her, "when I sit there talking with the goyim I'm always afraid that one of 'unzere yiden' is going to come over and push his nose in with a question that will spoil all the good work I'm doing."

And Mrs. Schnuk consoles him with the thought that after all the Jews who live in the neighborhood are all right . . . they aren't "greenhorns."

\* \* \*

But the other day she was very much alarmed. Rudolph came home looking so downhearted and so distressed that she did not know what to expect; in all the years of their married life she did not recall seeing him so unhappy.

"What happened?"

"What happened!" he returned, almost bitterly. "Plenty has happened! A man doesn't know what to do for our 'Yehudim.' Here I work day and night to make the gentiles our friends. I give my time and my money for good will . . . and now the 'kikes' come and spoil all the good I do. Wherever we go they follow us!"

"But what is it? What's the trouble?" Mrs. Schnuk asked in great alarm.

"The trouble is that some of our Yidden have more chutzpah than is good for the rest of us . . . that's the trouble! You remember that empty store in the Hotel Barig . . . on the next corner . . . ?"

"So what about it?" said Mrs. Schnuk, unable to



comprehend the why and wherefore of her husband's anger.

"Well," said Mr. Schnuk, seemingly crushed by what he was about to reveal, "you should only see it now. That's all! You should only see it! Right there on the hotel is a big sign announcing that a kosher restaurant is going to move in! You hear me? Strictly kosher it says, and kosher is in big Hebrew letters!"

With this Mrs. Schnuk sighed, and mildly said, "And what is so terrible about having a Jewish restaurant in the neighborhood?"

"Oh . . . you don't understand!" Mr. Schnuk roared. "Can't you see how terrible it is? Who wants a kosher place in this neighborhood? Who asks the 'kikes' to bring the ghetto into an American neighborhood? We try to cut out that old stuff and they force it on us!"

But Mrs. Schnuk only tried to quiet him down. "It's still not serious. After all, the Jewish restaurant is no worse than the Chinese chop suey place a block further. And on the next street there is an Italian place where everybody goes for spaghetti. And between you and me . . . you're still crazy about real Jewish food. So if they have real Jewish cooking maybe we'll drop in ourselves some time."

"Me?" screamed Mr. Schnuk. "Me to that restaurant! Nothing doing." His face wrinkled in disgust. "I don't put a foot into it, and I'll make it my business that a lot of other people won't either. We'll show them this is not the West Side! As far as my liking Jewish cooking is concerned . . . that has nothing to do with it!"

\* \* \*

The next morning Rudolph Schnuk walked to the elevated with a heart that was heavy and a spirit that was

downcast. He hoped to avoid meeting his gentile friends, particularly his traveling companions, because he knew they must already have seen the announcement of the kosher restaurant.

As he was about to enter the station he was met by John McCarthy, a cheerful Irishman whose ever present smile could pierce the deepest cloud.

Mr. McCarthy greeted his Jewish friend and together they ascended the platform.

"You are just the fellow I want to see," Mr. McCarthy said. "I noticed that there's going to be a kosher restaurant in Hotel Barig and that reminded me that now you're having that Jewish holiday when they eat blintzes. It's the day when the Jews got the Bible, I think. You and I will have to go over to the new restaurant some time, Rudy, and order some. . . . I just love blintzes!"



## HOLIDAYS





## "YANKEL THE TAILOR'S" DISAPPOINTMENT

### A Chanukah Story

JOSEPH WEINER bought a coat at Adler and Israels' wholesale and retail clothing store.

In truth he did not really need the new garment, for only six weeks before he had purchased the coat which he was now wearing. Weiner, however, is one of those persons who do not have to blister their hands in order to earn a dollar. He is a broker and a lucky one. When he sees a good-looking garment he buys it and pays the price.

When he put on the new coat, he left the old one at Adler and Israels. When he returned the next day for the garment he did not find it. It had disappeared—as if the earth had swallowed it.

From a business standpoint, Weiner could have asked the firm to pay him for the lost coat. That, however, would have brought his good friend, Yankel, into a bad light. For Yankel is the "all in all" in the tailor shop.

If it happens sometimes that Weiner loses a button, or something else happens to his clothes, he runs to Adler and Israels, and Yankel can fix anything for him. For Yankel, may he ever retain his good health, will, though he has made only a couple of stitches or sewed in a tiny button, wish that you wear your garment in "health and happiness."

And the fact that Weiner had handed his coat directly

to Yankel—this alone prevented him from putting in any claim for or making a row over the lost garment. For that would place Yankel in an embarrassing position.

And so that very same day Weiner forgot all about the good coat which he had bought only six weeks previously.

\* \* \*

The shamash of the synagogue of which Weiner is a member this year also, as in former years, brought him Chanukah candles in a pretty little box.

"Mr. Weiner," said the shamash, with a deep sigh, "candles this year are terribly dear. On account of the war there is a shortage of fats. A candle costs almost as much as a—a—an esrog—a lulav."

"You should worry," laughed Weiner. "If candles cost you more than a lulav, then your Chanukah donation should be greater than a lulav donation."

The shamash smiled visibly, pleased with Weiner's business-like donation.

"Wh-what—what do you see on me?" the shamash began stammering, noticing Weiner eye him up and down with a suspicious look.

"Nothing, nothing," remarked Weiner. "I was just looking over your new coat. A fine coat, as I live, a beautiful garment. To be a shamash is after all not so bad."

"May my enemies live so," sighed the shamash, "if it were within my power to buy such a coat. But the Lord blessed me with a good friend, a tailor, Yankel is his name. He works at Adler and Israels. He tells me a story that someone, a sport, a gay one, left the coat; and as he, Yankel that is, gets an *aliyah* and other honors, every now and then when he comes to the synagogue, for that

reason he made me a present of the coat—that is, a Chanukah donation.”

“How does it happen that a pious Jew, such as you are, should wear a sport coat?” argued Weiner. “Maybe it is made of a forbidden mixture of woolens.”

“May you have a long life,” replied the shamash, almost insulted. “What think you, such an honorable Jew as Yankel and such fine Jews as Adler and Israels will (forbid the thought) lure the whole Jewish community into buying the forbidden mixture of woolens! You should know that Yankel is a Jew, a true Jew with a Jewish soul. I tell you, you don’t know how much he saved me with the coat. It’s no small matter to buy a coat these days.”

When Weiner telephoned to Adler and Israels, asking them to send Yankel to him, it was a mystery to them. Yankel himself turned white as a sheet when he was told that he was wanted at Weiner’s.

“Hellow, Yankel,” Weiner greeted him as he entered the house.

“Good—goo—evening,” Yankel replied, with trembling knees.

“A fine fellow you are, Yankel!”

“I (forbid the thought) did not mean to—”

“No one wishes to accuse you,” Weiner assured him. “But how is a man such a—?”

“What is going on here?” the shamash interposed. “Creator of the world, what has happened here?”

“Calm down, shamash!” cried Weiner. “I have something to straighten out with Yankel. You just have patience.”

“Well, Yankel, how is a man such a—?”

“Temptation overcame me!” penitently pleaded Yankel.



"Temptation, what temptation, who said anything about temptation?" laughed Weiner. "Here is the shamash and in his presence I want you to confess: Did I make him a present of the coat in honor of the Chanukah, or did you?"

"You! You! Certainly you, Mr. Weiner!" cried Yankel with childlike joy.

Yankel and the shamash left the house.

Yankel felt as though a stone had been lifted off his heart, and his hands and feet freed from heavy chains.

The shamash murmured, "Candles are terribly dear. Not a penny Chanukah donation did I get!"

### A DOUBLE CHANUKAH

OLD Hyman Berkowitz leaves the synagogue, known as Congregation Sons of Jacob, where the first candle has been lit to celebrate Chanukah and to brighten up the usually dark pulpit.

He is on his way home.

It may be called home, but it is only a place to rest his weary bones on an iron cot which stands on the porch off the kitchen. It should be mentioned that this cot is painted white. A color that somewhat brightens the life of old Berkowitz.

He lives with his son, known as Simon Berkow. His daughter-in-law, Ida, hardly tolerates his busying himself in the kitchen, where he prepares his own kosher meals.

The subject is not of great concern to his son and daughter-in-law.

Good people of the neighborhood admonish them quite often because they do not keep a kosher home for their old father. Simon always says, "It's the bunk," but

Ida is more diplomatic. Her answer is, "I can't help it. Simon must have his ham and eggs for breakfast. His health is not so good."

To the great satisfaction of old Berkowitz is the hearty cooperation he receives from the Irish servant girl, Peggy. She, a devout Catholic, imbued with a deep religious feeling, sympathizes with the old man. She watches over his pots and pans. She helps him with his meal when he comes home from "Jewish church" every morning.

Early Sunday mornings they walk together three blocks. Then he turns to the right to pray in his shul and she to the left to go to Mass.

It happens quite often that they meet on the same corner on the way home, where the Berkows are still in a deep slumber. They had a card party until late in the morning. . . .

Peggy is very careful, when with tenderness she wakes the eight year old Benny, who is to be washed and dressed for Sunday School. Jewish children with whom he plays in the neighborhood have invited him to go with them to their Sabbath School, and Benny is all excited about the Bible stories, which he hears there.

As for his parents, they are not interested. As a matter of fact, when a committee of the synagogue called on them to join their congregation, based on the information that their son was doing so well, Mrs. Berkow explained that their son was attending Sunday School on his own accord.



Once while Peggy quietly entered to wash the kitchen floor so as not to disturb old Berkowitz, she found him awake. He addressed her, "You know, Peggy, our good

book tells us that good Christians, for instance, a good girl like you, will inherit the Jewish heaven."

Peggy in her simple way, which often was very humorous, replied, "Who knows, perhaps we will both meet over there in the same place. Of one thing I am sure, Mr. Berkowitz, we will have no bother in heaven with kosher food. I suppose you know that instead of eating, we will keep on singing with the angels."

When old Berkowitz related that for the just and righteous an elaborate feast is prepared in heaven where an abundance of goodies with choice wine and the fish Leviathan will be served, she jumped to her feet and exclaimed, "My God, what a funny people the Jews are! On this earth they are busy all the time with eating and eating, and there is no end of dish washing, and maybe they could have a rest in the future world, so over there they also have to eat."

\* \* \*

Hyman Berkowitz is on his way home from shul after praying over the Chanukah candles. Some of his kind have spent hours in exchanging old stories of their youth on foreign lands. At times one would make the point that he was a Galizianer, another would brag of being a Litvak, still another would rise above all as a Hungarian. Tonight they are all equal. They have celebrated the downfall of a common enemy of old and together hoped that the cursed bitter enemies of today will suffer the same fate.

\* \* \*

Berkowitz and his other friends immigrated to this country with their families when most of their children were small. Some of the parents kept pace with their

offspring, who grew up in the American way. Others were already too old to adapt themselves to the ways of a new life.

However, all of them had one desire and one wish at this time. The doors of the synagogue should remain open the whole night so that they would not have to go home.

Here they would like to remain and tell and re-tell the miracles of old, the great wonders the Father of Israel showed his children. But the janitor in his crude manner announced, "Hey, fellows, it is time to go home. I have to lock the doors."

Berkowitz reached the house where his resting place was the kitchen porch. It was a residence of twelve rooms, now completely dark. He was aware that his son and daughter-in-law were not at home. He had overheard his daughter-in-law arranging over the telephone to attend a card game.

Many days frequently passed without old Berkowitz having an opportunity to see them. His son was busy the whole day, and evenings he usually went out with his wife to parties. Peggy many times expressed sympathy for little Benny who complained that he never had a chance to relate to his Pa and Ma the beautiful Bible stories he learnt in the Sunday School.

Old Berkowitz reached the door of the house a number of times, but he turned back to the street and walked under the blue sky where a bright moon shone within the stars.

The attraction from above did not minimize his desire to be back in the synagogue with his friends with whom he could talk of days of old. . . .

The sweet ringing voice of his grandchild surprised him. He was more than surprised to discover the kitchen



lit up and Benny not in bed. The laughter of Peggy also reached him.

Quietly he opened the front door, to behold an unusual picture. Peggy was holding one candlestick already lit, and Benny was placing another candle in the holder, ready to light it and sing "These are the lights."

"B-Benny," stammered the grandfather, "where did you get the candlesticks? Where did you learn the Chanukah song?"

"In Sunday School the teacher gave us boxes of candles and she taught us how to sing."

"But so late in the night, dear child. You should have been in bed long ago."

"Yes siree," laughed Peggy, "this is the second time he's been lighting the candles. Once he did it before supper, and a while ago he got up and woke me to help him do it for his Pa and Ma."

Old Berkowitz was overcome with emotion, while tears streamed down his cheeks. His grandchild embraced him tenderly and said, "Grandpa, don't cry."

"Grandpa and grandchild," murmured Peggy, "God bless them both. I love to see that. But, by Jesus, I can't see how people who play cards every night can ever reach heaven."

## A NEW LIGHT

### A Chanukah Story

WHEN Louis Mersky rushed into the house each evening his first question was the usual one—"Is supper ready?" The question was never necessary, because Dora, his loyal wife, always had the table prepared for the evening meal and there was always good, hot food in the kitchen.

Then too she arranged to have the two children, Ben and Fannie, meet him at the door.

Louis Mersky belonged to that class of American Jewish business men who were always in a hurry and worked without stop. For him the Sabbath and Sunday were no different from weekdays. Only on the high holidays, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, did he slacken his pace. To be fair to him, however, it must be said that on these occasions he made liberal contributions to charity; furthermore, whenever approached during the year for a worthy cause he did his duty. "Here's my check, but don't bother me. I'm a busy man."

He adopted the same kind of attitude towards his family.

His wife got her check every week. Should she need more money it was forthcoming . . . as long as she did not take up his time with too many explanations.

Ben, his son, was ten years old and Fannie, his daughter, two years younger. Mersky knew that both children attended public school and also Hebrew school, and were doing well at both places. Often after supper the children wanted to relate the stories and legends which they learned in Hebrew school, but he had neither the time nor the patience to listen. He must be off to the club, a business meeting, or a card game.

In the beginning, Mrs. Mersky was concerned over the fact that her husband never had time to give his children the affection they deserved, but after a while she realized there was no help for it. At least, she was glad that when her husband went to the club for his card game, he was mixing with nice people.

So in answer to the usual question, "Is supper ready?" he received the usual answer, "Yes, all ready." But to-

night he noticed that his wife's face was lit up with smiles—unusual even for her. Her eyes sparkled and she seemed to be very happy.

His wonder grew when he recalled that his children had not met him at the door with their customary, "Hello, Pop."

"Where are the children?" he asked.

Mrs. Mersky smiled.

"Where are the children?" he asked again, impatiently.

"The children," Mrs. Mersky said finally, "will not come to the table unless you grant them a favor."

Mersky shrugged his shoulders. "A favor, kids; come here."

Ben and Fannie, dressed in their best, entered from the front room. The boy held a shining box in his hand and the girl a little book. The eyes of the children were sparkling as they met the inquiring eyes of their father.

"Tonight," said Ben, "is Chanukah, and you see, Dad, I have brought you some Chanukah candles."

"And our Hebrew teacher," Fanny put in, "says we ought not to eat supper until our father blesses the candles. Here, Daddy, is a prayerbook for you to read from."

"That's right," Ben continued, "and you're supposed to light the candles for eight days."

Mersky was touched by the words of his children and deep within he was very happy. But he still felt the pain of reproof. He would have liked to discuss the whole thing lightly. But the seriousness of his children as they stood before him with the Chanukah candles, and the smiling face of his wife, forbade it. He knew they were right, and he wanted to say the proper thing, but the words would not come to him. Finally, he collected his thoughts.

"Why . . . uh . . . of course. Can you imagine? I

almost forgot that this was Chanukah. Of course we will light the candles."

"Blessed art thou . . ." Mersky began and then he stopped. He had forgotten the words. But Ben prompted him and finally he reached the end. It had been a long time since Mersky had studied the story of the miracles which the God of Abraham wrought for his people, but now another miracle had occurred . . . Tears came to his eyes.

Until late in the evening the children sat at their father's feet, and while Mrs. Mersky sat by smiling, told him again the story of Chanukah . . . its meaning and the tale of Jewish heroism; the struggles of the Jews through the ages; and how the spirit of the Maccabees had been revived in every dark period, brightened by the Chanukah lights—the story which he had not heard these many years.

At the club they were missing "one hand."

## STRONGER THAN IRON

### A Chanukah Story

MAX ZAGORSKY bursts into the house with the same anxiety that his wife, Dora, has been familiar with all these years.

He never has time. Even now, when his small junk yard has grown to a large iron yard, with a great number of workers and many white collar people in the office, he has not changed his old way of life.

He still picks up a piece of rusty iron and enjoys sorting old metals. He will do other things which the ordinary laborers in the yard would not handle. His calloused hands never indicate the substantial balance he carries in the bank.



One of the laborers, a fiery agitator, once sought to organize a strike as a protest because Zagorsky was doing hard labor in the yard. Fortunately the union delegate, a man with understanding and reason, interfered.

"You understand, boys, that Zagorsky is not one of those who wants to save a few pennies. You know that he is a charitable man and will help a fellow any time. With him it is a matter of habit. He likes the smell of rusty iron, so let him have it. What do you care?"

\* \* \*

"Did you prepare the Chanukah lamp? Are the candles here?" Zagorsky inquires loudly when he enters the house.

From the kitchen comes his wife's reply. "My God, I almost forgot about it. Max, wait just one moment, I have to put the potatoes on the stove, and then I will bring in the lamp and the candles. The shamash of our synagogue brought them this morning."

"Did you pay him?" inquires the busy husband.

Not hearing a prompt reply to his question and knowing his wife's tendencies in such matters, he thunders angrily.

"Time and again I've told you that the shamash makes a living out of supplying us with lamps and lights for Chanukah, bringing the esrog and lulav for Succoth, and many other things with which we keep our *Yiddishkeit*. I warned you each time he comes with such things that you should pay him. My credit is good with the bank. Everybody trusts me, but my wife fears I will not pay her back if she advances a few pennies for *Yiddishkeit*. I am telling you again."

Zagorsky is about to say more when the door opens and their younger son, Ben, comes in with books under his arms.

The angry father seizes him and sings out.

"Here he is, my educated son, with more books under his arm. One would think that the books are fastened to him with irons. I paid out for his education thousands of dollars, and I got for it some kind of a philosopher—they call it bachelor. Who the devil knows what it means? I am not fortunate like other fathers, who get for their money, one son a lawyer and another son a doctor. I got something for my money which hasn't got the worth of a piece of old iron in my yard."

Mrs. Zagorsky hears her husband's admonitions from the kitchen. Her heart goes out to her son. She rushes into the front room holding the Chanukah lamp and candles.

"Again you are torturing that poor boy. What do you want of him? Haven't we got enough doctors who don't understand a *krenk*? Right in our family we have two lawyers, one now selling knee pants and the other cemetery lots. What do you want from our poor Ben? He explained time and again that within a few months he is going to get another diploma and then he will be a teacher in high school. He will teach other people to be educated since it is too late to teach you."

"Aha," sings out the excited father, "he will be a melamed in English. Ain't that great! For this I spent so much money. Instead of being a melamed he should better come in his father's iron yard and help out a little bit. The price of iron is going up every day. Not enough to supply the needs. Every day we deal with people from the government. Everything is swallowed up in defense factories to fight that dirty dog Hitler, and that yellow Yapanchick. With the government gentlemen one must speak a nice English and I have to ask other people, total strangers to me, that they should speak for me instead of having my own son. And this is all because my

son keeps his nose in the books in order to become an English melamed."

Mrs. Max Zagorsky senses that there is some justice in her husband's complaint. At this very moment there come to her mind the hardships and struggles her husband had gone through all these years. He is after all a good father and a loyal husband. In a soft voice she appeals to her Max.

"Come, come, light the Chanukah candle and let us all pray that our God make an end to all wars. That our Father in Heaven destroy our enemies of today as He did with the tyrants of old. Let us hope that next year we shall also be together."

That "be together" reminds the father, whose anger is subdued by the kindness of his wife, that very shortly their Ben will be drafted into the army. The momentum with which he came into the house a while ago disappears.

As he slowly walks over to the buffet where the lamp and candles are ready to be lighted he finds Ben waiting for him.

"Pa," asks Ben, "do you think that the celebration of Chanukah is of great importance?"

"What a question?" wonders the father. "What do you mean?"

"You know what Chanukah is? Evil men wanted to destroy our holy temple and kill our people and take away our country, and right there a handful of Jews got busy and with God's help they fought back, saved our people, and we are here year in and year out to celebrate Chanukah. And you ask me if Chanukah is important."

"You will agree with me, Pa," continues Ben, "that Hitler and his murderous henchmen are a million times

worse than our enemies of old. Our people are being slaughtered and killed by his cruel command. True, this is a global war. Many other nations are crushed by Hitler, but our Jewish people, their lot is the worst."

With trembling hands Zagorsky reaches out for a candle.

"You are right, my son, but remember that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the same one as of today. He performed unexpected miracles for the children of Israel in their darkest days and I am sure His wonders to us will be proven again."

"The wonders have happened already," agrees Ben. "Our Jewish boys have proven that they too possess the heroic spirit of the Maccabees. Their brave deeds bring honor and distinction to our people. I, too, belong to them. I enlisted today in Uncle Sam's Army."

## GRANDMA'S HAMANTASCHEN

### *A Purim Story For Children and Grown-Ups*

FOR Mr. Solomon Bindersky and his wife this Purim was the happiest in many a year. It was the first time in a long while they were privileged to have both their daughters, their son-in-laws, and the grandchildren at the table for the Purim feast.

Bindersky had never succeeded in influencing his daughters to share his ideals and inspirations, his dreams that the Jewish people would some day be redeemed.

They married young men of average American Jewish families, second generation "mir nit, dir nit" types. The Binderskys had been successful in having their son-in-laws, Ben and Dan, at their home for a number of Passover seders but never before at Purim. . . . Purim had always been out of the question.



The holiday which marked the victory of the Jewish people over Haman had never appealed to the son-in-laws.

In the months preceding Purim the boys had stopped in at the Bindersky home from time to time. The turmoil of the world, particularly the plight of the Jews, had preyed on their minds. Usually the discussion centered about present day Hamans.

"Don't despair, don't despair, my dear sons," Bindersky once said to them. "These are not the first Hamans the Jews have met in their history. An end will come to these Hamans too. Just wait, the God of our fathers will free us from the hands of these tyrants, as in days gone by."

At this point Mrs. Bindersky interrupted.

"That is just what I told the girls the other day when they were talking about Jewish suffering. I said that they should stop talking and better begin to pray and do something to help those who need it. Believe me, Solomon, they agreed with me."

And so when Purim time came it was a great joy for the old people to learn that their invitation to attend the Purim *seudah* had been heartily accepted.

Bindersky gave some thought to the idea of inviting his son-in-laws to shul to hear the reading of the Megillah portraying the hanging of Haman, but he realized that this would be asking too much, so he contented himself with merely having their company at the Purim feast.

\* \* \*

It was Purim night. The entire Bindersky family was seated around the table waiting for mother and one of the daughters to come in from the kitchen. When they entered Mr. Bindersky offered up a prayer in a patri-

archal fashion. As they ate, pleasantries were heard on all sides, particularly from the grandchildren. They were delighted with the tri-cornered "Hamantaschen," filled with luscious poppy seed.

One of the children asked which bakery the "Hamantaschen," had come from. Grandpa Bindersky explained with pride.

"Grandma doesn't buy them in bakeries. They are homemade."

The child asked, "Mommie, why don't you bake Hamantaschen like Grandma?"

Dan, the child's father, replied, jocularly. "Baking Hamantaschen and playing mah jong don't go together."

This reply brought laughter from the group, but Mrs. Bindersky came to the defense of her daughter.

"This is America. Young people have their own ways. Maybe the day will come, however, when they will even send presents to each other."

At this point, Ben, the other son-in-law, arose, smilingly. "I have a Purim present to give."

He took a blue card out of his vest pocket and handed it across the table to Dan.

"Here, Dan, this is yours. I joined the B'nai B'rith last week and I have a membership for you too."

Dan was on his feet instantly.

"Do you think you put one over on me, my dear brother-in-law? Here is my Purim present for you. I bought ten trees from the Jewish National Fund to be planted in Palestine in the name of Pa and Ma. I also bought ten to be planted in your name."

\* \* \*

Until late in the evening Grandpa Bindersky explained to his grandchildren the true meaning of Purim.

He told them how a bad man by the name of Haman long long ago lived in the city of Shushan in the land of Persia. This tyrant plotted that all the Jewish people be killed in one day. For that he paid bitterly. He built a scaffold on which to hang Mordecai, but instead he himself and his ten sons were hanged on the scaffold.

"Gee, I am sorry," called out the elder grandchild. "Hitler hasn't got even one son."

After grandpa Bindersky told them the story of how Mordecai with the help of Esther saved the Jewish people from being exterminated, he opened a book in which he showed them pictures of Palestine.

The picture that interested them most was one of a group of Palestinian children on the cover of a Palestinian weekly. The children were shown on a Chamishah Asar hike in honor of the beginning of the spring season in Palestine.

"You see," Bindersky said, "they are the children whose fathers and mothers lost their lives in Europe. They will find a safe home in the land of our fathers and they will be as happy there as you, my dear grandchildren, are here, in America."

"Gee," said the grandchildren, "that is great."

### McCARTHY SEES THE LIGHT

OF THE thirty-five families dwelling in the Arcadia apartments, only two are Jewish.

These two are thoroughly Americanized. Their children very seldom complain of being reminded that they are Jewish, though this happens often enough anyway.

Arnold Tabor, formerly Tabinsky, one of the Jewish tenants, is always busy, always running. One would think

that the entire universe rested upon his shoulders. (Of course, he never neglects a professional prize fight or a ball game.)

At the corner drugstore where neighbors meet to discuss problems of the immediate community and sometimes affairs of the world, Tabor also puts in his appearance on occasion. That is, when he rushes in to buy a couple of cigars. One he puts in his pocket and one between his teeth, and he runs out.

The other Jew, Simon Levin, is of a mild type, friendly and sympathetic. He is active in the modern congregation of the neighborhood, a member of the Zionist District. As a matter of fact, the non-Jewish neighbors look upon him with the same respect as his co-religionists do.

The Levins and the Tabors live across the court from each other in this building. Very often Mrs. Levin talks to Mrs. Tabor through an open window. The husbands, however, are more distant.

As for Levin, time and again he has attempted to get better acquainted with Tabor, but the latter has always showed an "I am busy" attitude.

One evening when Arnold Tabor opens the door of his flat with the abrupt question, "Is supper ready?" he remains standing in the doorway amazed.

"Lena," he calls to his wife, who is in the kitchen preparing supper, "who died in Levin's house?"

"Died?" comes the voice of Mrs. Tabor, alarmed, while the dishes fall out of her hands with a crash. "Died, who died?"

"Only a while ago I spoke to Mrs. Levin. She was as happy as ever. What makes you think that somebody died there?"

"Look in their window." Tabor points to the Levin's apartment.



Candles are burning there.

Both of them gaze across the court in silence.

Before they have time to say more, they notice Mrs. Levin carrying a tray with all kinds of goodies, her husband following with a cigarette in his hand and a smile on his face.

"Only a sourpuss like you can think of such things," Tabor's wife says with a sigh of relief. "Maybe this is a birthday or maybe an anniversary. Look at the crowd of people they have over there. I am sure if you were friendly to the Levins, we too would have been invited. I'll tell you right now, Arnold, if you knew what a fine man this Mr. Levin is, you would be more than happy to be in his company. Look at the crowd of fine people over there. Who ever comes to us? I often . . ."

"Oh, come on," replies Tabor resentfully. "I am what I am. When you marry again you will marry a greenhorn like Levin."

"Greenhorn!" she laughs ironically. "If you knew him better you would not say such things. Only last week, in the drug store, my heart swelled with pride when I heard him telling some non-Jews about Jewish contributions to our country, of Jewish sacrifices in this terrible war. Of course you . . ."

"Oh, come on!" he shouts angrily, "give me my supper. I am hungry and have no time to bother with your nonsense."

\* \* \*

The usual group of customers are gathered in the corner drug store carrying on their customary discussions. Jim McCarthy, a middle-aged, cheerful Irishman, who has just again returned from New York, emphasizes the fact that he would not take the Hudson and East Rivers,

even including a part of the Atlantic Ocean, for the Chicago River.

At this moment Arnold Tabor comes in to purchase his usual two cigars. One he puts in his pocket, and while he is about to place the other between his teeth, McCarthy greets him. "Hey, Tabor, why didn't you light candles for the Jewish holiday—Chanukah? By golly, those Maccabees were certainly good fighters. I'll bet they had some Irish blood—they fought for their rights.

"Levin invited me to his house, where my wife and I relished the pancakes made by Mrs. Levin. I believe they call them *lottkas*. Say, Tabor, don't you like Jewish pancakes?"

The rest of the group burst into laughter.

"There are two kinds of guys for whom I don't give a darn," says McCarthy. "One is the Irishman who is too lazy to march on Saint Patrick's Day and the other is the Jew who runs away from Jewish pancakes."

A stronger laughter breaks out among the listeners.

Arnold Tabor shoves his cigar between his teeth, biting with all his might, and runs from the store like a hunted rabbit.

### A GREENHORN'S LETTER

IT WAS a great surprise and disappointment to Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Lopat when they learned that their bachelor friend, Harry Savel, had refused to be their guest for the Passover seder.

When they lived in the old neighborhood in their modest home, he would refuse every other invitation in order to be with them.

"You are my best *landsleit*," he would always say. "I feel at home with you."

Even when he became wealthy, he still continued to celebrate the seder with the Lopats. Yet, when fortune had smiled on them too, he had refused their invitation.

The reason was revealed in the evening, when Mr. Lopat came home from business and spoke to his wife.

"Before you place the soup on the table, I want to read a letter I received in my office from our friend, Harry Savel."

It read thus:

"My dear friend Lopat:

"I hope you and your wife will forgive me for not accepting your invitation to be your guest for the seder. I hope this will not have any bearing on our friendship, which should last for many years. I hope to be with you during the year on many other occasions. But I cannot come to your seder. Again, I will ask you and your wife not to be angry if I give you the reason I am compelled this year to stay away.

"My experience of last year's seder stuck in my memory during the whole year. Your seder last year did not reflect even the smallest part of the traditions of the kind that our parents conducted.

"You and I ought to remember with what sanctity and delight our fathers read the Haggadah; the pleasant smiles on the faces of our mothers when they served the food, made with their own hands, to the table.

"Of course, your table last year was covered with the best that money could buy. There was an increase of guests over the year before—most of them your customers. Among them were a number of Christians. And I must say here that your Christian friends felt the religious atmosphere and the deep meaning of the historic Pesach event. They were the only ones who listened

to my reading of the Haggadah, and neither they nor their wives puffed cigarettes during the service.

"I will agree that your good wife, my friend, looked like a real queen, for in addition to your steady maid and cook, two waitresses were helping out. I cannot say that you looked like a king, because you didn't even look into the Haggadah. That honor, I am most grateful, was given to me.

"Instinctively, I felt the restlessness of the guests around the table. The pleasant odor which came from the kitchen made them anxious, and with glassy eyes they looked at me and I could hear them say, 'How long will he keep on reading the Haggadah? When will they serve the *kneidlach*?'"

"I was disturbed by the children who had very little conception of the historical event. All they knew was that the one who finds the *afikoman* will get a dollar. . . .

"At the very moment that I began to read, 'In every generation enemies rise up against us to annihilate us,' when the entire tragedy of Jewish history appeared before me with all its suffering, I could hear the kids demand, 'Hey, when are we going to look for the *afikoman*?'"

"I can hardly explain to you, friend Lopat, how hard it was for me to explain the meaning of the *charoses*—that it represents the lime and the mortar with which our forefathers made bricks to build the pyramids of Egypt—for at that moment the women were discussing the bargains in the downtown stores.

"And let me be honest with you, my dear friend; I noticed that your wife also wanted me to go through with the reading of the Haggadah as quickly as possible, for in the midst of the reading fruit was brought in on dishes manufactured in Japan.



"Coming back to the *charoses*, which brings memories of our fathers' enslavement and suffering and torture, the guests took to it with great appetite. They laughed and shouted. Someone announced, 'My God, is that delicious! I could eat a whole barrel of this stuff!'

"And what happened after the meal when I invited some of the guests to participate with me in saying grace and in reading some chapters from the Psalms? The Christian guests stayed with me.

"A little later, green tables sprang up like mushrooms in the field. I told you at the time that I was tired. The fact is I could not conceive that gambling should go on after the reading of the Haggadah.

"You and your wife quite often remark that I am still a greenhorn, because I adhere to our traditions and to Jewish life. I accept your observation graciously. I shall remain that way until the end of my life. All the money in the world will not deprive me of enjoying the spiritual heritage which I received from my parents. To be honest with you, I am getting tired of spending hours with people who desecrate our most holy traditions with false pretenses; the people who go to *shul* on *Yom Kippur* because of fear . . . and who celebrate Pesach because they relish the Pesach food.

"I am not a rabbi to preach to you or teach you. We played together as children and we went to *cheder* together in the same little town across the ocean. It is for this reason I take the opportunity of reminding you to be yourself.

"Please convey the good wishes of a greenhorn to your entire family."

## "NU, LET IT BE KNEIDLACH"

## A Pesach Story

YEAR in and year out, when her husband was still alive, Mrs. Rubin had known the joy of a real seder, despite the fact that thirty years in America had somewhat dimmed the luster of the Judaism which Morris brought over from the old country.

Little by little the process of "Americanization" had minimized the things which he held dear from birth, yet at least he celebrated the holidays with traditional punctuality. Yom Kippur found him fixed to his seat in shul until sunset, and the seder was always a great event.

In those days the two daughters had participated with Pa and Ma in preparing and observing the seder. Of course the table covered with holiday goodies was no small part of the attraction for the children.

They always remarked, "After all there is nothing like a good Jewish meal."

But times change. Mr. Rubin had passed away and the children had long since married. Prosperity came to the in-laws and they moved to the "swell" sections of the city; their inner life, like everything else, took new forms. The oldest daughter deserted her favorite potato soup when she moved into the Bon-Ton Hotel and substituted oyster soup; the younger daughter found the tang of fried herring entirely out of place in her quarters in the San Marino apartments, and it had to give way to the odor of ham and eggs.

The old mother never visited her children at meal-times lest they offer her food she could not eat; the new

and strange atmosphere depressed her. Her calls were infrequent.



Mrs. Rubin found it difficult to accept her eldest daughter's invitation to attend the second seder at their temple. It was only after the rabbi called in person to assure her that everything would be strictly kosher that she consented to go. Mrs. Rubin sensed the rabbi's orthodox background; she appreciated his understanding, therefore he won her confidence and assent.

The old lady, accustomed as she was to a seder where the father headed the table as the king and the mother presided as the queen, found a great crowd of people, gathered as for a banquet. The contrast puzzled her.

The little boy who asked the four *kashes* kindled a warm spark within her heart . . . it satisfied her Jewishness. But when the little boy sat down amidst loud applause from his audience Mrs. Rubin was again confused. For a moment she felt as if she were in the Yiddish theatre.

Although she understood little English, the rabbi's reading of the Haggadah appealed to her, for his voice was pleasant and rang with emotion. The familiar strains of "An only kid" made her feel at home. She strained her ears for more of the old time melodies, but the turmoil of the forks and knives and the noise of many voices drowned out the rabbi's words.

But she suffered most from Mrs. Zipzik, who sat across the table from her and conversed without a stop. Mrs. Zipzik was telling her neighbor about her new spring dress, the store where it was purchased, and the fact that she had paid more than anticipated because the style was so becoming. In the same breath Mrs. Zipzik made

known that at a particular grocery it was possible to buy matzah at a half-cent per pound less than last year.

"Anyhow," she went on, "I didn't buy much matzah this year, because the kids must have rolls in the morning, and Joe relishes pumpernickel with his ham and eggs."

On Mrs. Rubin's right Mrs. Bobtzik succeeded in raising her voice above the din to explain her own situation.

"You know," she said, "my only boy is in a military school. I reminded myself that this being Pesach he ought to know that he is a Jewish boy; so I bought matzah and macaroons and sent them to him by express. He should know that he is a Jewish boy."

"So far as I am concerned," remarked Frank Yutin, the ex-real estate man, who sat at the same table, "it's nice for a Jewish mother to send matzah to her only child at a military school, but from a practical point of view it's money thrown out."

"Why . . . why?" Mrs. Bobtzik demanded; as her face turned red.

"Because," Mrs. Yutin answered, "it's hard to make ham sandwiches with matzah; it crumbles."

At the mention of ham Mrs. Rubin shuddered; her appetite was gone.

\* \* \*

After the Sunday School children sang the remaining Pesach songs and the choir had rendered "Halleluyah," the rabbi blessed the congregation. Mrs. Rubin's daughter was busy greeting her many friends, for she was quite a *macherke* among the women.

The old mother meanwhile had an opportunity to hear several of the guests express their opinions as to the



seder. Most of them agreed that the gefilte fish was right, although the matzah balls were too small and much too hard. Some protested that after hearing the choir every Friday night one deserved a rest on Pesach. A few pointed out that the committee in charge should have provided cocktails or whiskey for those who did not like wine. One gentleman even remarked, "If the rabbi doesn't shorten the reading of the Haggadah for next year we are not coming."

When the daughter was finally ready to take her mother home the first question was, "Well, ma, how did you like the seder?"

The old mother, worn out by the noise and upset by the talk at the table, smiled, "Nu . . . in these days we must be satisfied with Jews who at least enjoy their *kneidlach* if not the Haggadah."

## A HELPING HAND

### A Pesach Story

ZUNDEL UTIANSKY, a resident of the Jewish Home for the Aged, returns to his room from the chapel where most of the inmates still remain to chat before going to the dining room for breakfast.

At this moment there again awaken in him appreciation and thankfulness to the superintendent of the Home for placing him in the same room with Rubin, who is loyal and kind to him. Old memories come of former roommates with whom he did not agree.

Zundel Utiansky, as a rule, is not the quarrelsome type nor is he looking for arguments, but he cannot tolerate wrong. Something within him has always forced him to raise his voice against injustice. So it is no wonder that a partner like Rubin is a Godsend.

The pleasant bell, calling everyone to the dining room, reminds Utiansky that he, too, must go there. Down the hall he meets his friend Rubin, who greets him with a warm smile.

"I wondered, Mr. Utiansky, where you got lost. Don't you know that this morning breakfast must be eaten early because tonight we have seder? No more bread after noon today."

Opposite Utiansky at the table, old Red Moise Laiser, the most beloved of the inmates, carries on with his usual witty stories, bringing laughter from some of his neighbors.

"Well, my good people," he calls out, "how do you like our women, who are dressed like dolls in honor of Pesach? Believe me, if they would have to worry about matzos or grating horse radish or chopping nuts for charoses or boiling eggs for the salt water, they would have no time to dress up like queens. Let me tell you, my friends, women will remain women. It doesn't matter how old they are; they still want to find grace in the eyes of men."

Old Mrs. Lapin, an old settler, takes exception to Reb Moise Laiser's remark.

"Is there any wrong in women liking nice clothes? Is it a crime to find grace in the eyes of men? Yes, Reb Moise, but not in your eyes."

Her last words are spoken with bitter sarcasm, and the others laugh.

"And why not in my eyes?" he answers. "In the first place, I am only eighty years old, and when I take a Russian bath I can still endure the heat for half an hour, which many younger men can't stand. Secondly, I got my new glasses yesterday and will be able to see the real size of the *kneidlach*."

"Ha, ha!" laughs Mrs. Lapin—"Are there kneidlach big enough for you, Reb Moise Laiser? How well we all remember the way you overate yourself last Pesach!"



Adjacent to the old people's home there is a small park where Utiansky sits on a bench reminiscing about his past life. His childhood days are more vivid than ever, because of the holiday spirit prevailing.

The panorama of these years moves before his eyes and brings him to the day when he came to this country forty-five years ago.

In his early immigrant days he was confronted with all the hardships and difficulties the newcomer meets. With the help and cooperation of a loyal wife he established himself fairly well. They raised a family with whom they spent many a pleasant seder night. It was their hope to spend a peaceful and secure old age.

Then came the crisis days when the bottom fell out of everything. His wife died. With her passing the family was broken up. Two of their sons looked for opportunities in other cities and their only daughter remained a widow, and had to work to support two small children.

He offers prayers to God upon his lying down and his rising up, for the fine community which provides this haven for him.

And yet his heart is heavy. . . .

Two years ago at this time, although he was alone, nevertheless he had busied himself with the seder. He visited stores, he spoke to people about matzos, he compared the quality and prices of wine. All in all he felt he had made a contribution to the seder table. And now, he is to come to the seder where he will accept all its blessings without doing anything for them.

Utiansky cannot understand why there isn't something for him to do when so much is being prepared for two hundred inmates.

In the early days when Utiansky entered the home he hesitated to visit the superintendent in his office, but he learned later that the superintendent was more than happy to receive inmates.

In a cheerful mood Utiansky enters the office.

"My dear Mr. Utiansky, what can I do for you?" the superintendent asks.

Utiansky, although courageous, humbly explains that he would be the happiest man if he could in some way give a helping hand in the Pesach preparation, since there was so much work to be done.

"But my dear Utiansky," replies the superintendent, "we have cooks to prepare the meal, and other hired help to do the other things. It is nice of you and I am happy that you feel like one of the family, but I am sorry there is nothing for you to do. All I want you to do is to enjoy the seder."

Utiansky stands like one forlorn, his face expressing bitter disappointment. The superintendent notices this and calls out.

"Fine, wonderful! I do have a job for you! You see, when all the inmates are seated around the table it will be your job to distribute the Haggadahs to them."

Utiansky raises his head with pride. A happy smile spreads over his face and as he leaves the office, the superintendent and the others look at one another and smile.



## MOSES AT THE SEA

THE FLORIDA sun which brings so much happiness to the thousands of visitors from the cold north, is sinking into the ocean beyond the horizon, to appear again at dawn bringing warmth and sunshine.

At this time of year, the atmosphere at the seaside is more peaceful than a few weeks before, when multitudes of vacationers from all over the country sunned themselves in the warm sands on the beach.

To Moses Lurya, who sits by himself on one of the cement benches on the ocean front, every white building in this neighborhood—as a matter of fact buildings in other neighborhoods also—is familiar.

For isn't he a pioneer builder of Miami? Wasn't he one of the early real estate men who were instrumental in transforming the swampy land into a beautiful and flourishing city?

He laughs to himself when he is reminded of a Jewish woman who explained that although she could not detect any anti-Semitism in this part of Florida, she had noticed that the elements of nature were somewhat anti-Semitic.

She explained as follows:

"When I bathe with my family at Coney Island, the waves always come towards you. Here in Florida, on the other hand, the waves run away from you."

\* \* \*

The cold breeze of the chilly Florida night hits his face and causes him to close his eyes.

Since the stars above and the waves below are removed

from the field of his vision, memories of days gone by come fleeting through his mind.

He thinks of those years when he made real estate investments in Florida. He reminisces about the hotels he built in the so-called prosperous days. When the crash came he lost them all, and they are now in strange hands.

Moses Lurya is deeply religious and combines his religiosity with a philosophical trend. So the material losses he has suffered do not affect him so much as the loss of his dear wife. Unfortunately, his children are also lost to him—not physically, but spiritually.

They are strangers to him.

Two years ago he suffered a heart attack. After weeks of convalescence, his doctor advised him to go to Florida.

Of course, he would prefer to go to California, or to some other warm state, but his doctor insisted on Florida.

Since he has come again to this sunny climate, he has regained his health. Of course, he avoids passing by the buildings he lost in order to prevent another heart attack.

He has been fortunate enough to find a modest room with some of *unsere menshen*, and he gets his meals at a strictly kosher restaurant on the beach.

As a matter of fact, the proprietor of the restaurant knows Moses from former years, and is aware of his present material condition. So he charges him by the week—something which is not common in this warm seasonal city where business has a cold aspect.

\* \* \*

Moses is undecided where to spend Pesach, which is but two days away.

The proprietor of the restaurant, to Moses' surprise, asks him whether he has been invited for the seder by one of the members of the congregation in which he is active.

As a matter of fact, Lurya has had a few invitations from friendly "natives." However, he has told them all that he will decide in a few days.

It seems that most of the invitations carry with them an attitude of pity. This is something that the sensitive nature of Moses Lurya can not bear.

The breezy wind subsides and Moses Lurya opens his tired eyes and gazes at the sea.

He suddenly reminds himself of the biblical story of the Children of Israel going forth out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses.

He pictures to himself the newly-freed slaves coming to the shores of the Red Sea pursued by the Egyptians. He can almost hear Moses commanding the Jews to proceed into the sea. And the Red Sea parts, and between walls of water they cross. When the Egyptians follow, the waters cover them over and they are drowned.

He can hear the voices of Israel singing songs of praise to the Lord of Hosts who has rescued them from their enemies and the voice of God thundering from Heaven:

"Moses, Moses, how can you permit your followers to sing praises to Me when the works of My hand—"

It grows colder and he rises from the bench and walks towards the heart of the city where the walls shelter him from the cold wind.

As he walks, two things disturb him and keep running through his mind. Whose invitation should he accept for the seder night, and how tall were the walls of the Red Sea when the Children of Israel passed between them?

## IT WAS AT MIDNIGHT

## A Passover "Kneidel"

IT HAS been many, many years since the old couple, Zavel Minsky and his wife, Sarah, have anticipated as happy a Pesach as they expect to have this year.

Their married children live in the better neighborhoods and the old people are usually alone on the holidays. Ordinarily their only pleasure is to visit the synagogue and return to their little flat to dream of the days when the children were small.

But this year will be different. All the children, the three daughters and the two sons, have phoned, as if with one voice, to say, "Ma, tell Pa we are coming for the seder."

And this is why the old folks are so happy. It will be a great event in their lives to have all the children at seder table again. Luckily, the three room flat across the hall is vacant, and the landlord has permitted them to use it for the occasion.

Old Minsky has requested his sons and daughters to bring all the grandchildren. He hopes that at least one of them will know how to ask the four questions, because he has been told that some of them attend temples where they are taught Hebrew.

In their first great happiness the old couple have not bothered to find out what accounts for this sudden affection on the part of the children. They only know one thing . . . the children will be with them for the seder . . . and that is enough.

With obvious pride Mrs. Minsky tells the women in the butcher shop of the coming event; she also mentions it to her friends when she meets them on the street.



Therefore on Saturday morning, when she goes to the Anshe Zedek Congregation, where her husband is a trustee and one of the pillars, all the women know of her good fortune.

"Mazel tov, Mrs. Minsky! We hear that you are going to have your children with you for Pesach."

Only Mrs. Lupiner is jealous. Her children are thoroughly Americanized too, but they never come to see her. In a somewhat sarcastic manner she asks, "But, Mrs. Minsky, tell me, how will you manage to have a seder with all your children in that little flat of yours?"

Triumphantly Mrs. Minsky answers, "That is why we have a God in heaven. You know, Mrs. Lupiner, that the God of Israel does not sleep, nor does he slumber. It is through his mercy that there is a vacant flat across the hall from us. There will be room enough to open the door for Prophet Elijah, may he come."

Of course the old people do not know that if not for their new daughter-in-law, Deborah, the children would never have thought of coming to the seder. Since Deborah came into the family she has been influential in introducing things Jewish. As a matter of fact, she has even succeeded in getting one of her sister-in-laws to join the B'nai Brith. She has encouraged all of them to send their children to Hebrew school. Though the youngest of the wives, she is the guiding spirit. It was only upon Deborah's insistence that the others decided to come to the seder.

Of course it is not an easy matter for the Minskys to prepare the seder. But the children send *pesachdige* provisions like matzos, wine, and the other traditional articles for the seder table. Deborah drops in the day before to see how things are going.

The morning of the seder the three daughters send

their servant girls, all gentiles, to help. One of the girls is Slavic, and Mrs. Minsky speaks to her in her native tongue. The other two are jealous because they cannot so easily converse with the pleasant old lady. But at any rate, the three finally get the seder prepared, under the watchful eye of the happy mother.

Pesach night, when Zavel returns from the synagogue, it is as though the angels in heaven have blessed his path. For under his own roof he is greeted by his children and grandchildren (all are present except the oldest son and one of the son-in-laws, who have been detained by urgent business affairs).

The old mother, as the queen of the evening, takes her place beside her king. She is garbed in a new dress . . . a present from the children. Zavel is moved, but he manages to control himself. "Who will ask the four questions?" he inquires.

"Let me, grandpa!" says Rubie, the oldest child of one of the daughters. The boy stands up and with a ringing voice begins, "*Ma nishtanah* . . ."

And the grandfather listens to the clear pronunciation. It is the first time he has heard the child recite Hebrew.

When it comes to the traditional answer, "Because we were slaves under Pharaoh in Egypt . . ." young Rubie's voice rises above all the others.

Then the meal is served. After it is over some of the guests rise from the table to stretch, but the others lift the third cup of wine and drink with the happy old couple. Soon the children are smiling, and nodding to the grandchildren to be quiet . . . the tired old folks are dozing away at the table.

And Zavel Minsky, trustee of the Anshe Zedek congregation, sits at a long table with Rabbi Eleazer, Rabbi

Joshua, Rabbi Akiba, and others of the patriarchs at Bene-Berak. They are relating the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt. And he hears the voices of their disciples, among them the ringing voice of Rubie, his grandchild, saying, "Masters, the time has arrived to read the morning prayer."

But Zavel wakes up. He is confused. It seems as though he has been in another world. Now he is back in this world, at his own table surrounded by his children . . . but they are playing cards.

## WHEN SPRING COMES AGAIN

### A Pesach Story

OLD Moses Lubin has taken his usual position at the seder table beside the inmates of the Old People's Home. Their faces, lit up by the quaint old candelabra, show the glamour of a second youth, yet old enough to be asked the *Ma nishtanah*, the everlasting question.

Moses Lubin has occupied the same seat for more than a decade. In these days, when the holiday atmosphere fills up every nook of the Home For The Aged, Lubin is reminded of his departed friends, the daily companions of the Home, who have now joined their comrades in everlasting sleep.

He sees them as through a haze, and even the living appear in a mist, all save the one admitted the day after Purim, Deborah Zalkin, the Deborah whom he had quite forgotten all these years. This was a wound that had been completely healed but was re-opened when the gates of the institution were opened for Deborah.

Lubin peers into the Haggadah and the tale of the ten plagues that afflicted Pharaoh (the Hitler of old) and his people, recalls to him all the tribulations and

hardships Deborah and he passed through in their youth. At that time they had been abundantly filled with love and hopes of a mutual kind in their little native hamlet.

She was the daughter of a well-to-do, prominent Jew, while he was the son of a humble shoemaker of honorable extraction. Since Moses was of no distinction, her parents were not willing to accept him as their son-in-law.

Ever present in his mind was that memorable evening when the soft melodies of Yossel, the fiddler, filled the little town and re-echoed in the adjoining woodland, informing him that his Deborah was being led to the canopy with another man, the choice of her parents.

That night was for him one of lament and sore weeping, like that of a pious Jew on the ninth of Ab, for the destruction of the Temple.

His parents could share his grief, in that they knew their poverty was to blame for their child's ill-fate.

The great expanse of ocean that dried up the tears of many of the suffering newcomers to this land, somewhat relieved his own troubles also. He married, raised a family, and shared his portion of prosperity for quite a few years, until he lost his wife and his wealth and finally found his rest in this Home for the Aged. Here, free from worldly matters, he gave himself up to God's Torah with a peaceful mind, until the day following Purim, when Deborah arrived.

"Ma nishtanah?" asks one of the old folks, in a resounding voice. This old man has been elected by all inmates to act as the child.

Moses Lubin directs his gaze to the old "child" who has asked the age-old questions, and there he notes beside the old man his old love, Deborah. She seems like a vision before him.



"Ma nishtanah?" the second question peals forth.

Moses sees little change in Deborah. Her face is round and has a bit of color, and her wrinkles seem not to show in the light of the candles. The white shawl folded about her head makes her appear like Deborah, the prophetess.

"Ma nishtanah?" comes the third question.

Lubin's heart grows warm and his spirits revive, for Deborah has raised her eyes from the Haggadah, and as with the glow of two bright stars they gleam on him.

The fourth question being duly asked, the whole assemblage with one voice responds.

"Slaves were we unto Pharaoh in the land of Egypt, and the Eternal One brought us forth from thence with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm."

Never ere this time has Lubin lifted up his voice so loudly. The old folks look at him with astonishment. Yet he cares not, for he knows that Deborah has understood him well; her lips are moving as if with the refrain.

His quiet disposition and genial character have never called for special recognition from his fellow inmates in the synagogue.

It is quite an incident and one of the happiest moments of his life when he is called upon to fill the cup of wine and asked to chant the prayer before Elijah's entrance. . . . With the manner of a child he fills the cup and recites the words.

"We therefore are in duty bound to thank, praise, adore, glorify, extol, honor, bless, exalt and reverence Him, Who wrought all these wonders, for our ancestors and for us. He brought us forth from bondage unto freedom, from sorrow into joy, from mourning unto festivity, from darkness unto light, and from servitude unto redemption. Therefore let us chant unto Him a new song, Hallelujah!"

All respond, "Hallelujah."

The Passover dishes, so palatable and *Yiddishlich*, are relished by all. The clatter of forks and knives blends with the cough of one for whom the wine is a bit too strong. Of all, Lubin alone seems to pause at his meal, but does not note that from a far off nook Deborah gazes at him, and likewise seems to have no desire for food.

"Mr. Lubin," remarks one of his neighbors, "why don't you taste one of those delicious kneidlach? They melt in the mouth."

"His recitation really entitles him to two kneidlach," another laughingly suggests.

When all file out of the dining room, some weary with age, others with too much food, Moses remains at the door.

"A happy seder night we have had," he says as a sort of goodbye greeting to Deborah as she passes.

"Your reading was excellent," she remarks as she goes on with the other women. He follows her with his eyes, until he loses sight of her in the far end of the corridor, where her room is located.

Deep sighs are heard from Lubin's room, while one of his neighbors remarks, "I bet Lubin has eaten too many kneidlach and hasn't the sense to take bitter salts."

But if his neighbor had only placed his ear close to Lubin's door, he would have heard him murmur the immortal love verses of the "Song of Songs."

## A PASSOVER QUEEN

It is one week before Passover.

Zelinsky's grocery store is crowded with holiday customers. This year Zelinsky's second daughter, Mary, has

stepped into the role of a saleslady. The eldest daughter, Lena, and brother, Sam, are in the store for the second year.

The customers are composed mostly of those who have lived in the neighborhood for years, but in the process of Americanization have moved to all parts of the city, their presence today being due to the necessities of the Pesach seder. Others are here because Zelinsky sells only kosher merchandise, abiding by the ritual for Yom Tov. Still others are here through sentiment, memories of bygone days when Zelinsky's was the center of their immigrant conversations.

The last group comprises those who are present solely to display their new automobiles, to prove their recovery from the depression.

Mrs. Zelinsky shows the hardships of many years, working from opening at six in the morning until closing, late at night. Even when she feels that she can no longer keep her heavy eyes open she makes herself appear young to all. She is friendly, with a hearty greeting for everyone.

"Thank God, we have lived to see another Pesach!"

Mr. Zelinsky is, as always, playing the part of chairman of the reception committee.

"Hallo. How's your husband? And your son? By this time he must be a real captain. And your daughter ready to join the Wacs."

For those without children:

"By golly, you look as young today as when you were married!"

Mr. Zelinsky feels that by alertly greeting his customers he is doing his part, even though he does not share in the actual selling or packing. After all, why did he raise a family?

And this year yet another child is lending a willing hand to help.

While the rest are busily engaged, Mr. Zelinsky can be heard.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

In all fairness to him, if there were no one to receive his greetings, possibly he would help his wife take packages down from above, particularly the matzah and noodles on the top shelf.

But he must listen to the trials and tribulations of Mrs. Aronson, and how difficult it is to get her chauffeur a uniform.

As in the past, Mrs. Aronson is buying all her Pesach goods from her old friend.

"Believe me," she says importantly, "my husband was not fool enough to lose his head like the rest. With God's will, he was connected with bond committees of real estate, and so we have no kick coming. . . . And why not? Who should know better than you, Zelinsky, of the hard life, the struggles we went through when we lived next door to you?"

"Do you remember," she adds, winking, "when you wouldn't trust me with a half dozen herring and a pumpernickel?"

A taxi pulls up, and out steps another woman who has also moved to the richer neighborhood, Mrs. Kadansky.

Her appearance is a pleasant surprise for all, especially Lena Zelinsky, whose eyes and cheeks light up, adding to her natural beauty.

Mrs. Zelinsky's "hallo" is drowned in the greetings showered on the newcomer, for Mrs. Kadansky is beloved by all, since wealth has left her unspoiled. She has retained the simplicity and modesty of the typical Jewish mother.



Mrs. Aronson breaks the silence following the thunderous hellos.

"How are you, Mrs. Kadansky? A taxi? Where is your automobile? Have you seen my new car and my chauffeur?"

"My automobile," explains Mrs. Kadansky, patiently, quietly, "will be here shortly. My son, Bennie, has a charity meeting and he must collect contributions. Yes, thank God, my son gives me great happiness; he is very nice, considering the present generation. Always telling me he will marry a poor girl."

The two Zelinsky girls glance shyly at each other.

"Should I live so, how right your Bennie is," exclaims Mrs. Sarah Gurevitz, who has lived all these years next to the store. She has come in, not to buy, but to use the store as a place to meet her old friends to whom fate has been so much kinder than to her.



A large limousine stops in front of the store, and a young man steps out.

As he enters the store he is greeted proudly by Mrs. Kadansky who says, modestly, "This is my son, Bennie."

He greets everyone pleasantly.

When he approaches the eldest Zelinsky girl, he speaks, to the amazement of all, as though he has known her for some time.

"Tell me, Bennie," inquires his mother, "how do you know Lena?"

"Well," he explains, "when we had our charity drive Miss Zelinsky was one of those who volunteered to do clerical work in the office. Since then we have been friends."



Lena is wrapping a package of matzah. Her hands are trembling, as though she is very nervous.

A significant, puzzled silence prevails.

Bennie, with dignity and outstretched hand, steps up to Mr. Zelinsky, whose face expresses boundless joy and understanding.

In a voice ringing with laughter, he exclaims, "Mr. Zelinsky, will you and your wife give your blessings if Lena becomes my Passover queen?"

### HOLIDAY SEATS

YOUNG couples are rowing on the placid waters which have been artificially pumped into the lagoon. Songs and laughter echo and re-echo over the park. Little children, watched over by their mothers, dip their bare feet in the lagoon. Elderly Jews promenade the lanes of the park and carry on discussions in leisurely Sabbath fashion.

The two of them occupy a bench by themselves. He was this year left a widower; she is a widow. Both of them have been reduced to the status of lodgers with sons-in-law and daughters-in-law.

He has carried his head on his shoulders for approximately sixty years, but he still feels that he has much yet to derive from life if only he can free his heart of a longing for something to chase away his loneliness.

Her eyes are turned toward the boats in which young couples are merrily rowing about, poignantly reminding her of the golden days when she herself was young.

As she turns about and their eyes meet, he greets her with "Good Shabbas." And they move closer to each other.

"The air in the park is delightful," he remarks in a friendly tone.

"For the living the sun shines everywhere," she sighs, "but there in the grave it is dark . . ."

"You're right," he offers by way of consolation, "but concerning God's actions (forbid the thought) one must not ask questions. Everything is from Him."

"There are many men older than my husband was," she says mournfully. "Why did God have to take away my faithful husband, I do not understand."

"Aha," he responds with a musical intonation, "did we understand His ways and His conduct, everything would be altogether different!"

And then with eagerness he asks, "Where are you going this year for the high holy day services?"

"Last year at this time my husband, *alav hashalom*, already had tickets for the synagogue of his old townsmen. This year I don't know myself in which synagogue I will pour out the bitterness of my heart. My children—some of them go to the synagogue, some of them don't—where I will go doesn't matter to them."

She bursts into tears.

"Take my advice," he speaks in a tender voice. "The cantor who formerly conducted services in the Sons of Zion synagogue has this year been engaged to lead the services with his powerful choir at the Knights of Columbia hall. Tonight I am going there to buy a ticket for myself. If you want to I will buy one for you also."

A feeling of relief overtakes her as though some one has saved her from a critical situation. But a question flashes through her mind. "Where shall I get the money with which to buy a ticket?"

"Believe me," he says by way of resuming the conversation, "it may not seem just right to go to services in a hall, but the cantor is all right and will make up for much. Just yesterday I happened to be passing his house

and heard him practicing the melody he himself composed for one of the prayers; it simply melted my heart. Moreover, the tickets are not very expensive. I'll buy two of them and when the holidays are over, we can square up."

Her gratitude is expressed with a nod of the head.

"Let us meet at the cantor's house tonight and I will give you a ticket."

Her assent is once more signified by a nod of the head.

Wolinsky, the former cantor of the Sons of Zion synagogue, knows both of them and well understands their loneliness. The arrival of the widow and the widower at the same moment to buy their tickets seems a coincidence.

"I consider it an honor to have such fine people come to hear me conduct the services," the cantor proudly greets them.

"Yes, at one time I was somebody in town, but now I am nothing—nobody, lonely, and without a home," mourns the widower.

The widow nods her head, as if to say, "The same is true of me."

"See," the cantor says; "here are the two tickets. One is for the last seat on the right side of the hall, which is reserved for men; and the other is for the left side, which is reserved for women. You will not be far from each other. . . ."

The widower expresses his satisfaction, while the widow busies herself with reading the print on the tickets.

"Ah," sings out the cantor, "were you to take my advice, I have a wonderful suggestion to make."

"What do you mean?" asks the widower, knowing all the while what is on the cantor's mind.



"A little later," answers the cantor, "there will be a big crowd here buying tickets. But now we are alone. I will call in Levin, next door, as a witness, and we will make a *chuppah*. Then you can come to hear me as man and wife."

\* \* \*

It is night now and they are once more seated on the bench in Central Park, oblivious of the fact that they have eaten no supper, save for the piece of cake and bit of wine at the cantor's house.

They sit and make plans for their life together, and seek plausible excuses to make to their children as to why they can no longer remain lonely. . . .

#### WITH A POLICEMAN'S BLESSING

PHYSICALLY, Ben Shore never turned his back on his people; but spiritually, he was estranged from them.

One would say that he was miles away from all Jewish interests except the Jewish food his mother prepared for him.

Every week that he spent with his cronies in the poolroom, increased the distance between him and his people.

That he did not physically turn his back on his people can be explained by the fact that each time non-Jewish rowdies would molest a Jewish beard or express unbecoming utterances regarding the Jewish people, Ben was the first one to show his might and to prove his strength.

Not only in the poolroom, where he spent most of his time, did the talk about Ben's power of organization and wonderful leadership go on for a long time; but in the

other poolrooms as well he was the topic of conversation.

One day when Ben was in the midst of playing cards, he heard that a bunch of non-Jewish boys were tormenting a Jewish peddler.

As soon as he heard this, all the card tables and the pool tables were deserted.

Ben had organized all their habitués of Jewish faith to fight the uninvited enemy.

Of course, the two patrol wagons that took the fighters of both camps to the station were filled with split heads and broken noses.

The next morning in court, Ben came out a hero.

The judge admonished him.

"Look here, Ben, in the future ask the authorities to defend peaceful citizens when they are disturbed by rowdies. But never again take the law into your own hands."

\* \* \*

Notwithstanding the fact that the poolroom was in the midst of a neighborhood where Jewish mothers were busy for days buying fish and meat and all other edibles for the high holidays, Ben Shore was not interested.

As a matter of fact, this again reminded him of his Hebrew teacher who had come to his home when his father was still alive to teach him Hebrew.

For every mistake that Ben made in reading or chanting, the melamed would slap his face or hit his hand with a ruler.

When he complained, his father had an answer.

"If you would apply yourself like a good Jewish boy, the melamed wouldn't have to punish you. On the other hand, if you didn't deserve it this time, you'll earn it the next time."

There was a time when his mother would remind him of his indifference; plead with him; beg him to mend his ways—but to no avail.

However, it seemed that the war and the plight of the Jewish people had affected Ben.

His few friends who had made the supreme sacrifice for our country, also made a deep impression upon him.

There were times when he used to stop playing pool or cards and enter for a while into a spirit of contemplation. Of course, even at times when he was deep in thought, he would readily respond to the call of a friend to a game of pool.

"Say," one of the boys announced, "I hear that the Patowker Shul has a great chazan this year. I am told that he is a regular actor—a movie star. Why, he is even wanted by the opera."

Ben raised his head from the card table and called out.

"Why, that is the shul where my father used to *daven*, and mother still goes there!"

\* \* \*

It was Yom Kippur and the doors of the Patowker Shul were well guarded by a policeman and a couple of trustees to check and recheck that no one come in without a ticket.

The windows were tightly closed so that no one standing outside could enjoy even a little of the chazan's talent.

In the midst of all this turmoil, Ben appeared.

When one of the trustees asked him if he had a ticket, he explained that he did not intend to "daven." He only wanted to find out how his mother felt, since he realized

that in her later years she did not have the strength to fast. Therefore, he was very anxious about her health.

The trustee replied, curtly.

"You can't come in without a ticket. As for your mother, don't worry about her. You will see her when she comes home."

Here the policeman who had known Ben for a number of years came to the rescue of a loyal son. With a wink in his eye he whispered into the ear of the trustee. The trustee turned to Ben and spoke sharply.

"All right, come in and see your mother. But, remember, if I catch you davening, I'll break every bone in your body!"

## NEW YEAR GLIMPSES

### I

#### HE MAKES A MINYAN

So THICKLY crowded is the street that it is well nigh impossible to push one's way through.

The public is buying things necessary for the holiday. The air is dense with the smell of fruits and spices, and filled with a medley of voices.

He stands on a corner which is less crowded than the rest of the street and sizes up each passerby. The women with the filled baskets remind him of his mother at home in the old country. The men with their bundles remind him of his father, except that at this hour he would already be at the synagogue.

But three weeks has he been in this country; and already in this brief period he has gone hungry longer than during all the rest of his life. Ordinary days it



doesn't matter so much. But on a holiday! To sit at a stranger's table on a holiday is in itself not very pleasant; but to walk the streets and know nothing of festivity is much worse. His face grows sadder by the moment and his heart aches with a nameless longing.

"A green one, no? A newcomer?" he hears some one ask at the same time that he feels a jerk at his sleeve. "Are you long in this country?"

He sees before him a muscular fellow with a ruddy, smooth-shaven face, whom one would hardly take for a Jew.

"I am but three weeks in America," he answers.

"Where are you eating during the holiday?"

"Nowhere."

"Would you, perhaps, like to go with me out into the country to the little town where I live? We lack one man to complete our minyan (ten men, the quorum necessary to conduct public religious services). You will have plenty to eat and drink and in addition a few dollars."

A fresh color lights up the face of the green one.

## II

### HIS DECISION

Walking along slowly he reads his mother's letter. He received it today.

"Child of mine," she writes, "last year your father still lived. And both together we wept at the table when we reflected upon the thought that you had wandered away from us. Your father died. You are far from me, and I mourn over all my troubles. Child of mine, pray fervently, and implore God for my sake—I implore God for your sake. Perhaps we will yet be granted the boon of seeing each other."

He stops at the corner. Here he must decide what to do. Two contending forces struggle in his heart.

"No! I will rather buy her a ticket to the theatre after the holiday. Today I am going to the services. Mother pleads. But then Lena will be angry."

He glances at the theatre and then gazes toward the street which leads to the synagogue. He virtually pulls himself from the corner and rushes—to the synagogue.

## III

## A CANTOR ON TRIAL

Mrs. Cohen sips the foam from her hot pot of soup and sobs as she does so. She wants her husband to come with the good news that he has at length persuaded Charley to go to services at the synagogue.

"A fine country, America," she sobs. "One must beg one's children to go to the synagogue even once a year. Themselves, they don't have God in their hearts. Oh, oh, oh, what a land!"

With a despairing look, Mr. Cohen comes in.

"Well," she asks him, "did you succeed?"

"No."

"What does he say?"

"He says he would go to the services but the cantor doesn't satisfy him."

"How's that? What does he know to be having opinions about a cantor?"

"He says that he himself played cards all night with the cantor, and—."

"A fine country!" she sighs and shakes her head.

## IV

## THE MISSIONARY

It is past midnight the night before Rosh Hashanah. Levey, the missionary, is just leaving his meeting hall.

His heart is not very joyous. He had arranged a rich and varied program for the day just passed—singers, players, and first-rate speakers. He had also prepared a powerful sermon; and still the “stiff-necked” Jews did not come.

Among the pious Christians who give their thousands of dollars to rescue Jewish souls, he often notices a dissatisfaction. And they are not to be blamed, for their money brings no returns.

He hears the approach of a street car and starts rushing to the corner. Suddenly he stops.

The singing of a cantor and choir veritably paralyzes him. The voices come from a second floor—which is all lighted up—and resound through the whole block. Cars rush by, but he doesn't hear them. His heart, his soul, are on the second floor—there where the singing is. And sweet memories of childhood years enshroud him.

## V

## NEAR THE EXIT

On the high holidays he is compelled to attend services in a hall, for in the synagogue the ticket of admission is beyond his means.

Sabbaths, however, he attends services in a synagogue and sits near the door.

Not always did he sit in the rear. There was a time when he was one of the pillars of the synagogue and occupied an honored position in one of the front pews.

That was over there, in the old home across the sea.

Many of those who now occupy prominent places in the synagogue, he knew back home, where the book of their lives was open and but few cared to read it.

Often he muses: If they have worked themselves up here, what does it matter so long as they do good?

He finds a justification for him who did evil things in the old country, and even for another who committed greater wrongs. Also he finds consolation for himself—having to sit near the door.

When the services are over he can go out immediately without having to meet the others.

### WHEN THE GRASS IS GREEN

SAM BENDERSKY is driving his automobile through Sherman Boulevard, a Jewish neighborhood where the atmosphere of the high holidays is conspicuous.

It is only three days before Rosh Hashanah. Signs with red letters over the doors of the synagogues proclaim the names of world-renowned cantors who will penetrate the gates of heaven with their heroic voices.

When Bendersky notices other automobiles driven by his fellow-Jews, filled with articles and provisions for the holidays, when he observes the great number of Jewish women carrying baskets with food to beautify their holiday tables, a yearning overtakes him.

It reminds him of those years when he himself lived in this old Jewish neighborhood. Through his memory run those happy days when as a newcomer he was among his own "landsleit." He thinks of those with whom he could talk about his childhood in his native little town across the ocean. His children had grown up and his



wife, wishing to play the part of a modern woman, had forced him to move into one of the fashionable neighborhoods.

Twenty years have elapsed since he took up residence in the new neighborhood. Considering other newcomers of his type in that neighborhood, he has acclimatized himself more readily than the other Jewish residents. He is a director of a conservative synagogue, has joined a civic organization where the majority of the members are non-Jews, and cuts the grass in his back yard with his shirt outside his trousers—like the non-Jewish neighbors around him.

The fact is that most of the non-Jewish neighbors with whom he comes in contact consider him a “white” Jew. One of the neighbors once remarked to him, “You know, Mr. Bendersky, I was scared to death when you moved into this neighborhood. Some of your people don’t take the proper care of their homes. But I must say that your home is a credit to our block. You’re O.K. with me.”

Some of the other gentile neighbors thought well of Bendersky because he was always willing to listen to them tell of their affairs, rather than insist that they listen to what he had to say.

Nevertheless, whenever he came to the old Jewish neighborhood of earlier years, he felt like remaining there for a long, long time.

Since the arrival of his brother and family from Poland a few years ago, Bendersky has become a more frequent visitor to that neighborhood. His brother’s children are all employed, so their old father is able to spend most of his time in the synagogue. He has brought with him an abundance of Jewish lore and an eagerness to carry on the same spiritual life in the new land.

He is admired and respected by the people with whom

he "davens" in the synagogue. Often, when they remain after prayers to study, they come to him for an explanation of some passage which is not clear to them. Each time they say, "He knows almost as much as our rabbi."



Sam Bendersky, now driving to his golf club where his friends are waiting for him to spend the day on the green, utilizes the opportunity to visit his brother, Yosel. Of course, he is sure to find him in the synagogue.

It is a little before noon; the worshippers are all gone. Yosel is alone, deeply immersed in a volume of the Talmud. On many a previous occasion Bendersky has found his brother interpreting passages of the Talmud with a sing-song of enthusiasm and self-satisfaction.

Frequently people in the neighborhood stop at the door of the synagogue to listen to Yosel's chanting.

Some of them express thanks to God that men like Yosel have come to America to uphold Jewish learning.

This time his brother Yosel is silent.

Sam Bendersky, too, remains silent, not wishing to disturb his brother.

As Yosel raises his head he notices his brother and exclaims, "Sam, why are you standing at the door? Please come over here."

He pauses for a moment, then continues. "Any news in the papers about our unfortunates in Europe?"

Sam walks over to his brother and takes note of the red eyes and the pages of the book dotted with tears.

"Yosel, I note you have done some crying!"

"How can one help it?" answers Yosel in an apologetic tone. "The Jewish plight is terrible; their suffering is indescribable. It would seem that God's curse has fallen upon our people. It is hard, hard to forget. . . ."

"Eh, I wonder what would become of all of us in America if we were to keep crying about European affairs? Of course, we should help them and do what is possible, but crying can help neither them nor ourselves. After all, brother, life must go on. Within a while, for instance, I am to be on the golf links where the grass is green and the air exhilarating. For a while you forget the whole world with its countless troubles. Oh, Yosel, Yosel, when you arrived in this country I begged you to become better acquainted with the American life. Why, who could tell, perhaps you, too, would enjoy a game of golf. Of course I realize that it is hard even to explain to a man of your mentality the meaning of golf."

Sam reminds himself that he must continue his trip and parts with his brother by offering the seasonal blessing—"Leshanah Tovah."

After the evening prayer Yosel goes home.

He has anticipated a reprimand from his older daughter for coming home late, but instead he finds the whole family crying.

For a while he stands bewildered, not knowing what has happened. Yosel has always been mindful of the relatives he left behind him in zones of danger in Europe. Who can tell, thought Yosel, maybe some bad news has been received from his relatives in the war zone. In reply to his question, his daughter breaks into a lament.

"Father, why look for misfortunes abroad? Tragedies may happen here too. . . . Only this morning Uncle Sam visited you in the synagogue on his way to the golf club. . . . Yes, Father, only this morning. . . . He was brought home. . . . Well, he played too much and fell dead from a heart attack. . . ."

When Yosel chants this year's "Yizkor" in memory of the dead he includes his brother Sam, who had fallen dead on the green grass.

## YOM KIPPUR CRUMBS

### I

#### SICKNESS AND REAL ESTATE

It was Kol Nidre night.

The congregation was crowded. A great number of the worshippers were met by friends whom they had not seen for almost a year. All were listening to the traditional melodies rendered by the choir.

It seemed that the melody of Kol Nidre was making a deeper impression this year than a year ago, when the cantor experimented with one of the new arrangements of that prayer.

When the rabbi stepped forward to deliver his sermon, he took the congregation by surprise by offering a prayer for a member who had been confined to bed.

The words, "Oh God Who healest the sick, we pray unto Thee to send a speedy recovery," seemed like years to the listeners, for they were impatient to learn for whom the prayer was being said.

A murmur went through the audience when the rabbi continued, "Bring health and strength to our dear brother, Morris Pontz."

No wonder the congregation was surprised when Morris Pontz appeared the next morning at services.

Since Pontz had stopped bowling it was known that he was not altogether well.

Last night when the rabbi had prayed for him, the members anticipated the inevitable.



"What happened to your husband?" Mrs. Klein inquired of Mrs. Pontz.

"Well," Mrs. Pontz explained in a matter of fact way, "my husband had one of those spells again yesterday, and I thought that the rabbi's prayer on Kol Nidre night would help him."

Mrs. Klein insisted, "If he was so sick yesterday, why in the world didn't you keep him home today?"

"Well," Mrs. Pontz answered, "my Morris had to make an appointment with one of the members of the congregation to close an important real estate deal."

## II

### EATING IN UNISON

Lubarsky and Tartarsky, the former claiming to be orthodox and the latter an active member of a reform temple, spent their idle hours quarreling about who belonged to the true wing of Judaism.

Many times they were not on speaking terms for weeks on account of their divided opinions.

The heat of their discussions reached its peak during the high holiday season.

Lubarsky boasted about the world renowned cantor his synagogue had engaged this year.

To this Tartarsky would remark, "Your renowned cantor is also a prominent Hollywood actor. Woe to Israel if an actor has to turn to a cantor overnight and bombard the gates of Heaven with his voice."

"Nu," Lubarsky countered, "What have you got? A guy who eats oysters."

"If you have an idea," Tartarsky replied, "that reform rabbis eat oysters, you are greatly mistaken. As a matter

of fact your wife and my rabbi's wife buy kosher meat from the same butcher."

It was Yom Kippur afternoon, when a great number of the children of Israel promenaded the streets for fresh air, and made pilgrimages to those places where non-Jewish restaurateurs always sought the date of the Jewish Day of Atonement, because of the great increase of guests on that day.

At the door of one such restaurant Tartarsky and Lubarsky met face to face.

It was the first time in their lives that they ate in unison.

### III

#### WHAT A LESSON!

Mrs. Simon Abner was a great help to her husband in his grocery store. As a matter of fact, it was *their* store.

It was their first year of business in this neighborhood, composed of non-Jews and a few Jews who had lately migrated there.

It was not hard for them to convince each other that it would not be practical to close the store on Yom Kippur.

The husband maintained that all the Jews were hypocrites and that going to *daven* was a farce. Mrs. Abner was more thoughtful. She said, "The mere fact that we are going to keep our store open on Yom Kippur doesn't mean that all the Jews are hypocrites. For us it is simply a necessity, for we cannot lose our Christian trade."

They did their usual business on Yom Kippur day, but during the next few days they missed a number of their steady customers.

It was a cause of great anguish when Mr. Abner noticed Mrs. Swanson, one of his loyal customers, carrying a bag of groceries, coming out of his competitor's store across the street.

He rushed from the store and approached her. "Mrs. Swanson, have my wife or I mistreated you that you don't come to us anymore?"

"Oh, no," Mrs. Swanson answered emphatically. "Oh, no, not at all. But I would be the last woman in the world to patronize any person who has no religion. People who are not honest with themselves can never be honest with others."

### AN ANNUAL VISIT

JACK RUBIN, the gents' haberdasher, was occupied in trimming his window with his new fall line of hats. We must agree that where hats were concerned, Rubin's taste was of the best, and as an attentive merchant he knew which of his customers were big-headed and which were small.

On this particular occasion he had given the clerks strict orders that he was not to be disturbed while in the window, for he felt that, just as a doctor does not leave the operating room, he, as an artist in hats, should not be annoyed while creating his masterpiece. Therefore he was much annoyed when informed that his wife was on the phone and absolutely had to speak to him.

"I have no time to speak to her now," he snapped to the trembling clerk.

"But, Mr. Rubin," whined the guilty one, "your wife wants to talk to you about tickets. Tonight is Rosh Hashanah."

Rubin knit his brow. He knew that Rosh Hashanah

was somewhere in the offing and that this was already Saturday, but it had never occurred to him that the high holiday was actually at hand. Bidding the clerk assure his wife that all had been arranged, he stepped out of the window and left the store in haste.

His first stop was Simon's grocery store in the next block. There he inquired of Simon whether services were being held in the Hibernian Hall as during previous years, and whether or not reasonable seats were still available.

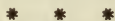
"They have no cantor in the hall this year," answered Simon, "so I myself am going to a regular shul."

"What shul should I attend?" asked Rubin, with the air of one completely lost.

"What do you mean?" Simon asked. "Are you a stranger in town? Why, right under your nose you have three or four synagogues. And furthermore" (with a shrug of his shoulders), "as far as I'm concerned you can even go to the temple. Those reform women come into my store and believe me, they're real customers."

"Temples?" cried Rubin, as if a hot iron had singed his body, "I'm not a Yehuda! I want you to know that I am a real Jew. I'm an orthodox Jew! Do you understand?"

By the time that Simon had finished his remark that a real orthodox Jew doesn't wait until the last minute to secure tickets for himself and his family, Rubin had gone.



In the office of the B'nai Jacob Shul the secretary and the shamash were busily engaged in making a list of those to be given honors during the holidays, those to be called to the Torah, and those to receive other recog-



dition for their loyalty and devotion to the congregation.

"I would like to buy two tickets," a very humble voice interrupted to say. The two looked up to find Rubin before them.

"Oh! You want to buy tickets," said the shamash in a sarcastic voice. "Certainly there's no wrong in that. After all, a Jewish soul is not to be denied, but Mister *leben*, supposing that all the seats are gone and we have no place for you?"

"What?" growled Rubin, "you mean to tell me that you have no ticket for me? Shall I go without davenen this year? By God, aren't you Jews?"

"We are Jews," returned the secretary calmly. "But you know that the miracle which used to take place in the temple of old, when the walls would expand to make room for the late-comers, doesn't happen today. Anyhow, not in this shul . . . and particularly not for you. Our seats are reserved for members and for the poor who cannot afford to buy tickets. Why don't you go to the shul across the street and try your luck there?"

But in the shul across the street Rubin found the office closed and no one to whom he could talk regarding the tickets. People were already entering the shul to pray.

A lonesome feeling came over him when he saw the children of Israel assembling to pour out their hearts to their God and to ask forgiveness for their transgressions in order that they might be inscribed in the Book of Life. Depressed and forlorn, he looked for a familiar face but he found no one whom he knew.

With heavy heart he left the building and walked toward the third shul. Here he noticed an even greater number of people, among whom were several of the younger set who were customers of his.

"Well, well! If it isn't Rubin!" he heard as a hand slapped him on the back. "I'm glad you are coming to my Pa's shul to daven. Some shul, isn't it?"

Rubin turned to find that the back slapper was young Barsky. His words helped to lighten the aching heart, for although Rubin did not understand the reference to "My Pa's shul," he was happy to find a friend and possibly one who might use his influence for those badly needed tickets.

"Is is really your Pa's shul?" Rubin asked.

"Certainly," came the proud answer. "He's the president. And by the way, show me your ticket and I will direct you to your seat."

Rubin felt the floor giving way beneath him, and his collar grew tight around his neck. With humility he explained.

"You know. I asked a friend of mine, oh, about two weeks ago, to get my tickets and he disappointed me."

"Aren't you a member of my Pa's shul?" inquired young Barsky, in a tone of voice that intimated that such a thing was almost beyond belief.

Rubin was bewildered. Now he was dealing with a customer who had bought hats from him. Who knows, perhaps he might lose him because of this, and such an influential young man could even spoil more customers for him. For after all, this was a question of loyalty; it was "Pa's shul." What should he say to justify himself?

"Well . . ." added Barsky, in his happy-go-lucky tone, "I'll call Pa and I'm sure he'll take care of you."

\* \* \*

"I know you, Mr. Rubin," the old Barsky greeted him. "You are the haberdasher. As a matter of fact, you must remember the time when Rabbi Glick and myself called

on you to ask a donation for our Matzah Fund for our poor brethren, and you replied that if a man cannot afford to buy matzah he should eat bread. Of course this is not the day to cast one's sins in his face, this day when 'Even the fish in the water tremble.' What can I do for you?"

"I . . . I . . . I . . . want to buy a ticket," murmured Rubin, very much ashamed of himself.

"This is neither a circus nor a theatre," answered the president, in a serious tone. "Our shul is supported by members who carry the burden of responsibility the whole year around. Don't you realize that it costs money to heat this building, that our rabbi must live, that our cantor must be paid, and that the teachers who instruct the 300 children in our Talmud Torah must be taken care of in a decent way? So far as the seat is concerned, if you had come an hour earlier, I would have been unable to do anything for you, but we were just notified that one of our members has passed away. That being the case, you may have his seat, and I hope that your prayers will be received at the gate of Heaven and that you will secure from the Almighty a year of life, happiness, and content."

Rubin was overcome by the president's lecture on shul responsibilities and synagogue interest, and the offer to give him a dead man's seat awoke deep feeling.

"Well," said the president, "it's getting late. Make out your check for fifty dollars and come and pray as a regular member."



"Remember us unto life, O King,  
Who delightest in life,  
And inscribe us in the Book of Life."

sings the boys' choir, as their beautiful melodies fill the shul.

"Life . . ." and Rubin moves uneasily in his seat, as he recalls that last year someone else occupied his place. Someone else prayed for life to the God of Israel. He himself does not know who it is that is now gone from this world. It seems that a strange force keeps him from even inquiring, for one feels easier in not being able to recall a face, now dead, that once smiled in life.

"Our God is One . . . He is our Father, He is our King," chants the sweet tenor of the cantor, but to Rubin a strange voice comes from the floor beneath:

"Rubin . . . don't remain silent. Pray, shed a tear, open your heart. Fall seasons and spring seasons and new hat styles will come and go long after you are in your everlasting sleep. Rubin . . . shed another tear that your prayers may be heard, and that more years will be granted you for life, and more customers for hats."

In the midst of his thoughts he is suddenly called to the Torah . . . for the president is anxious to honor new members.

But Rubin has difficulty in making the berachah . . . the shamash finds it necessary to help him along. From the platform (bimah), Rubin looks into the audience and his eye falls on the seat . . . the seat of the dead. From that very spot comes again the strange voice:

"Rubin, go to the synagogue more often and you will learn to make the berachah."

He steps down from the bimah and manages to reach his seat. It occurs to him that this is Saturday evening . . . the best time of the week for business. He has prayed enough. That strange voice irritates him and he desires to be free of it.



A short time later we find Mr. Rubin once again before his beloved store, admiring the way his hats are displayed in the window.

### CROSSROADS

EIGHT MONTHS before Ben Braskin, the owner of the Bon Ton Store, ladies' ready-to-wear, had married his Catholic secretary. The marriage did not cause much excitement among Braskin's friends, because for years they had been coming in contact with Miss Catherine O'Brien while she was his "right hand" in the business; she remained in the business, so the only difference was that the cheerful and witty Miss O'Brien became the cheerful and witty Mrs. Braskin.

At first Braskin's customers were a little bit cool to the new Mrs. Braskin, simply because she had become Mrs. Braskin, but soon she was back in their good graces. After all, the Jewish women who patronized the Bon Ton were not too Jewish-conscious; they did not belong to congregations or Jewish organizations. They were interested in cards and styles and the like, and since these interests were general, Catherine had something in common with them. When people have common interests they are not long kept apart.

She continued to attend early mass; this was something that belonged to her personal life. Ben was indifferent to religion, whether his own or someone else's. When a friend commented on the fact that Mrs. Braskin attended early mass Ben chuckled and said, "It simply means that while your wife is still snoozing, mine is already communing with the angels."

But the marriage did give rise to a problem. Ben's widowed old mother had been opposed to it from the start and for a long time afterward she refused to see either her son or the new daughter-in-law. But Catherine never gave up hope for a reconciliation.

The first meeting was not pleasant. The old lady turned her head away from her guests and no one said a word. Nonetheless, a few days later, on Mrs. Braskin's seventieth birthday, Catherine sent her flowers with a card attached which read, "By coincidence today is also my Irish mother's birthday. . . . I hope that both she and my Jewish mother will have many more happy occasions." The old lady had never before received flowers as a birthday present; she was a little pleased.

Once, when Catherine spotted a dress among some new ones at the store which she thought would look particularly well on her mother-in-law, she took the dress to Mrs. Braskin as a gift. The old lady permitted Catherine to assist her into the garment with the air of one beginning to see a light where there had been only darkness before.



And then, as will happen frequently in the life of an old lady, Mrs. Braskin had one of her bad spells and took to bed for a number of weeks. Ben was out of town at the time on a prolonged buying tour, but Catherine visited her daily and gave her the care of a devoted daughter. One afternoon Mrs. Braskin looked at her daughter-in-law and, in a voice which indicated that she was sorry for her initial attitude, said, "Catherine . . . you have a good heart, and, after all, that is the important thing." This one remark was, so to speak, the end

of hostilities, and it made Catherine very happy. The same day she wrote to Ben about it.

\* \* \*

Catherine often reprimanded her husband because he was less faithful to his synagogue than she was to her church. His stock excuse was that he was too busy for such things. However, when Catherine learned through a chance remark made by a customer that the Jewish high holy days were approaching she told Ben very plainly that no further alibis would avail him. He would attend the synagogue during the forthcoming holidays and . . . by way of encouragement . . . she would join him. It was agreed.

From Mrs. Waldman, a neighbor, Catherine made it a point to learn what she could about the significance of the days. Mrs. Waldman told her what went on in Heaven on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. In Heaven it is written on Rosh Hashanah who shall live and who shall die; who shall prosper and who shall go hungry; who shall be washed away by water. These decisions are sealed on Yom Kippur; therefore, let each repent during the ten day interval so that his lot be improved.

\* \* \*

Catherine was much impressed by the spirit of the holidays and she anticipated them with eagerness. It was therefore a great disappointment to her when Ben found it impossible to be in town on Rosh Hashanah. But he promised faithfully that nothing would keep him from attending the Yom Kippur services, and he meant it, particularly because Catherine expressed a desire to sit next to his mother.

The day before Rosh Hashanah Ben visited his mother

to pay his respects. Mrs. Braskin, reconciled to the fact that at least her boy had married a good woman, was overjoyed to learn that Catherine wanted to sit near her in the synagogue on Yom Kippur. "After all," the old lady said with a sigh, "I have heard of many cases where women like Catherine have become good Jewesses. Who knows, maybe she too . . ."



*The Kol Nidre evening made a strong impression on Catherine. The next afternoon she again took her seat alongside her mother-in-law. The other women, now tired and worn from fasting and prayer, no longer paid any attention to Catherine, though at first she had been the center of attraction.*



It was just at the hour when the Cantor began to chant *Musaf*. He had a rich voice and the melodies touched Catherine. As the voice sang the opening of the prayer, "O Lord, here I am . . ." she sensed the familiarity to the Gregorian chants of her own church.

Each time the women rose Catherine stood with them. She wished that she had been able to pray as they did, but of course she did not know Hebrew. Finally the congregation reached the *Al Chet*, the prayer where each person beats his breast and repeats aloud, "For the sins that I have committed . . ."

This Catherine did too. Mrs. Braskin noticed it and her heart was filled with joy . . . but she did not see that at the same time Catherine crossed herself. . . .



## A SIMCHAT TORAH STORY

THE large synagogue is richly illuminated. Each electric light brings out the presence of an empty seat.

This is Simchat Torah Eve. Our forefathers for hundreds of years have rejoiced at being privileged to carry with them the Torah handed to Moses on Mt. Sinai.

Our people in the diaspora always celebrate Simchat Torah, after the prayers on Rosh Hashanah to be inscribed in the book of life and the day of Yom Kippur when we ask forgiveness for our transgressions.

This evening the seats are not occupied as in the days "when even a fish trembles in the waters" and not even as in the days of Succot.

Simon Wolff, who has made his living all these years as a customer peddler, sitting now facing east, at the right of the Ark, is chanting the prayer, "And let our eyes behold Thy return in mercy to Zion." Abraham Bin, grocer of the neighborhood, sits at the left of the east wall. He is chanting the prayer, "Lead us with exultation into Zion, Thy city, and unto Jerusalem, the place of Thy sanctuary, with everlasting joy."

Outside of Rabbi Merkin, spiritual leader of the congregation, Bin and Wolff and another half dozen are the only worshippers this evening—the only ones who have come to rejoice with the Torah.

The shamash, Berrel Mink, standing on the bimah, tired from days of toil and labor through the high holidays, observes the small congregation with a melancholy eye. He thinks to himself, if only those who tried to get in without tickets during the high holidays would have come tonight!

Very shortly the Torah will be taken from the Ark and

there are not enough men in the synagogue to call to the altar to divide the honors.

He remembers when the synagogue was filled to its capacity on Simchat Torah; when fathers with their children danced as our fathers have done for centuries before.

Very few fathers are here this evening, and still fewer children. Most of them have grown up and moved to others parts of the city. Some of them have joined temples and some conservative synagogues. The more considerate sons and daughters made pilgrimages to these old parents on the high holidays. They came here to please Pa and Ma.

\* \* \*

The scroll lies open on the altar and the shamash is calling upon the few to chant the prayers before he reads a portion of the Torah. Among them is Moses Rosen, who years ago had contributed large donations for such a great honor. As a matter of fact he donated a scroll to this synagogue in memory of his wife who departed years ago.

While walking up to the Torah he is mindful of the fact that this time the honor is being given him out of pity, and because there are so few present. For during the high holidays when so many honors and recognitions were distributed he was a forgotten man in the congregation. When the shamash calls him, in the usual Simchat Torah mood, "youngster," it reminds him that before the holy days he made application for admission to the Home for the Aged.

The one who creates the holiday atmosphere fitting the traditional Simchat Torah eve is Nathan Chavkin, a cloak operator, whose loyalty to a labor union does not

minimize the love for his religion. When he is called to read a passage in *Atta harena* he reads with happiness and exultation, "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." His voice reaches the hearts of the others. Even the rabbi, who is deep in thought, raises his head and smiles.

Some coloring is added to the occasion when a few children of the neighborhood, holding American and Zionist flags, are brought in by their mothers.

The shamash invites them to participate in the *hakafot* when the elders carry the Torahs around the *bimah*.

The laughter and mirth of the children prompt the elders to sing the traditional melodies, known to all of them.

The spirit of *Simchat Torah* fades somewhat when the children leave the synagogue after the ceremony, and the scrolls are returned to the Ark.

The shamash invites the small congregation downstairs where schnapps and *Lekach* are awaiting them. Mike, the Irish janitor, is already there. Mike has been with the synagogue for a number of years. Outside of the janitor work he knows all about the congregation politics. As a matter of fact, the president of the synagogue once had the unpleasant task of taking him out of jail on bail because he had a fight with the janitor of another congregation who dared to say that his rabbi was greater than Mike's. It is also known that Mike is more familiar with the calendar of Jewish holidays than some of the children of Israel.

While all offer blessings over the schnapps, Mike is not overlooked. This is his toast: "Here is to Hitler. May he bust this coming year and may even the worms refuse to eat him."

Mike touches a painful chord. All the sorrow and grief of our suffering people are expressed on the faces of the few present.

Simon Wolff suggests, "Since our president is absent today I will be the host and ask you to drink *lechayim* to the health of our rabbi."

A few more drinks and there are dancing, singing, and crying.



The policeman on the corner, familiar with Jewish life, to whom most of the residents of the neighborhood are known, is not surprised when he sees Simon Wolff staggering from side to side, singing weepingly, and being helped along by Nathan Chavkin, who cries even louder than Wolff.

The policeman remarks, "My Irish mother of blessed memory always said the Jews and the Irish have their kidneys next to their eyes, but by golly only the Jews can dance and cry at the same time."





## OLD WORLD



## I KNEW THEM

### REB ISRAEL OSHER, THE CAP MAKER

HIS white, alabaster face, black beard, and dreamy eyes made you forget that his hands produced caps. For he reminded you of one of our sages of old. After he had fitted his customer with a cap and said, "Wear it in good health," you felt that God above had joined his blessing.

### YEKE, THE TAILOR

On week days he sewed garments for the peasants who lived near our little town. Evenings he would be found in the synagogue, listening to the discussion of talmudists, though he himself lacked knowledge of the Talmud. As a matter of fact, he dressed like a talmudist and his Sabbath garments were finer than those of our rabbi.

He never left the synagogue until the congregation had partaken of his box of snuff.

When a cantor came to try for a position, Yeke had his say and his opinion was listened to.

On the Sabbath Day one who met Yeke would not believe that all week long he was busy making garments for peasants.

### SHMUEL, THE FIDDLER

He was the only one in our town who trimmed his beard or polished his shoes. He and his violin were known far and wide in the surrounding countryside.

At weddings, one stroke of his bow brought tears to



every eye. It is told that at a certain wedding the bride fainted, she was so touched by the warmth of Shmuel's melodies.

But weddings did not occur every day, and he had time to promenade in the market which was the center of our little town. There he was the source of information as to what was going on in the great world.

He was loved for his fine Jewish humor and admired for his friendly spirit.

#### NAHUM BENZE KVASNIK

He provided kvass (cider) for our townsmen on which they made Havdalah (the prayer which separates Sabbath from the week days). His pleasant smile would break through even the heaviest cloud. Day in and day out he studied the Talmud.

The day he died our townsmen mourned his loss. Everyone had something nice to say about him. David, the shoemaker, remarked with a deep sigh, "To make Havdalah over Reb Benze's kvass meant a week of *par-nassah*—sustenance for all."

#### REB ITZE DAYON

Perhaps his depth of learning would be forgotten, for there were so many of his type. But we can never forget the way he officiated at Neilah, on Yom Kippur day. For years this honor was given to him, even though he had a deep, hoarse voice.

As he struggled to make himself heard, we children thought he was fighting to conquer Satan.



Some of us may forget the geography of the little towns from which we came, but we cannot forget the person-

alities of those who made so vivid an impression on us in our childhood.

None of them were rich by American standards; they were far from being captains of finance. But they enriched our communities in a spiritual sense.

All of them have gone to their everlasting sleep. Our beloved Annixt is now in ashes, and our saints and dear ones the victims of cruel and bloodthirsty Nazis.

We bow our heads in reverence to their memory. Let us stretch out our hands to help those whose lives have been spared.

### THE GRAVE DIGGER

OUT beyond the city limits is the cemetery. The same quietude which reigns over the graveyard also holds sway over the surrounding neighborhood. The tumble-down shack at the entrance to the cemetery seems ready at any moment to cave in altogether.

The only inhabitants of the shack are Michel, the gravedigger, and his wife, Fage Gruneh. Michel was born in the selfsame shack and when his father died, at the age of eighty, he took over the position of gravedigger. Now he is himself seventy years of age; and in the course of the years he has covered plenty of bodies, including those of his first two wives.

Michel does not allow any of his time to go to waste. As soon as he finishes a job he takes to his Psalms and recites appropriate portions in a subdued tone—as if afraid of awakening the dead from their eternal sleep.

The winter winds whistle in wild and weird tones and blow fiercely. The trees in the cemetery moan from the struggle against the powerful wind which seems to be

trying to uproot them and uncover much that has been buried for a long time.

The hour is five in the morning. Michel has just arisen. He recites *Modeh Ani* (the arising benediction), washes his hands, and, feeling his way in the dark, finds the lamp and lights it.

"Oh, how cold it is!" he mumbles, noticing the small window sheathed with a thick covering of ice which in turn is coated with a layer of snow. One wouldn't drive a stray dog out of the house on such a day. He puts the lamp near the window to thaw out the frost, to see if the morning star is already visible, and if it is already time to say the morning prayer.

"For in his death he can take nothing along; his wealth can not descend with him," Michel chants heartily, and Fage Gruneh is aroused from her sleep. "It's late already, isn't it?" she asks.

"It's early yet," he replies. "Sleep; you're barely alive; rest in your bed; you won't delay anything."

He wishes to say more to her, but he sees a spark of light through the window, far in the distance—a glimmering light piercing the darkness. The spark seems to flicker out and then flashes up again—all the while approaching nearer, nearer. Michel soon recognizes the twinkling light. It is not a star, but a lantern. A member of the Chevrah Kadishah (burial society) is coming to order the digging of a grave for a new "guest."

The sigh which tears itself out of his heart reminds Michel that he himself is growing weaker and weaker; and that the age of complete inefficiency is already confronting him. He has not strength enough to wield the iron pick with which he breaks the earth. And there is no child to inherit his job.

"Reb Michel, Reb Michel, open the door!" a hoarse voice is heard on the outside.

Michel opens the door and in comes Berke, messenger of the Chevrah Kadishah, breathing heavily. In his right hand he carries a thick stick; in his left, a smoky lantern; and on his feet, piles of snow.

"Zise the Chapper \* died last night," the messenger relates. "I was with him to the last minute, until he turned toward the wall. I tell you, Reb Michel, such a hard death I haven't seen for a long long time. Several hours he wrangled with—"

"Wrangled, did he?" Michel interposes. "Did he torture himself more than he once tortured little children whom he took against their will from father and mother and turned over to gentile hands?"

"But why must you recall old sins?" admonishes Berke. "Anyhow, now he deserves that we do him honor. In his will he has left considerable for charity; and his family has remembered the Chevrah Kadishah as well. There will be enough to make a party for us. My purpose, in brief, in coming here is to tell you to dig the grave near that of the old rabbi. And may you have a pleasant day."

As soon as Michel notes the first glow of daylight, he recites his morning prayers; and then he takes his tools—the pick and shovel—and goes to work.

"My God, the soul which Thou hast given unto me came pure from Thee," Michel chants, and in the crack-

\* In Russian Jewish life, during the reign of Nicholas I, Jewish children over eight years of age were seized and forced into military service for a period of twenty-five years. Those so seized were called *Contentisti*, around whom a literature was written. The "Chappers" were Jews who were paid by the government to deliver the quota of Jewish boys to be raised as soldiers.



ling of the fire he seems to hear a response from the dead.

He passes through the rows of graves, and though they are covered with snow, each grave stands out distinctly before his mind's eye—each tombstone with its epitaph. He knows all who lie buried as though they stood before him in the full flush of life. Now he has come to the place where Zise the Chapper will find his eternal rest. Michel builds a fire to thaw out the ground. He warms himself and recites psalms in his usual subdued tone.

The pieces of firewood have burned up. Michel begins to dig. Each blow with the pick and every shovel of dirt cost him much hardship. The frosty air cuts and smarts his face. His breath and sweat have congealed into a thick coating of ice over his beard. One shovel after another he digs away. The grave is half dug. He lifts his head and straightens up to take the pain out of his back. And directly in line with his eyes stands a high tombstone covered with snow, but the words "A man of charity and lover of mercy" are distinctly discernible. There lies a comrade of Zise the Chapper. With hatred he bows his head and digs on.

A hindrance appears which Michel has not anticipated. In the middle of the grave he runs into a stone. What shall he do? His waning strength will not suffice to lift it out. And soon Zise will be brought to the cemetery. He strains himself to his task and is immersed in sweat. He does not feel the cold any longer. A terrible fatigue overcomes him and he sits down upon the stone for a rest. He is lost in far-off thoughts. His eyes close and visions of long forgotten scenes and places appear before him. He is a school boy again. He sees Zise the Chapper and his colleague perpetrating their fiendish crimes. A mother is taking her child to cheder. Zise runs over and tears the

child out of her arms. She screams and weeps and pleads with him; but Zise responds only with devilish laughter that seems to echo to the ends of the earth.

Then it seems to Michel that it is summer. He lies in the cemetery, veritably hidden in the thick, high grass together with a party of little children, whose parents have brought them there to hide from the wild tiger—Zise. All of a sudden a wild cry breaks out among the children, a mournful wail. They see in the distance Zise running and his coat flapping in the wind. Michel takes them into his arms and clasps them to his heart. Such warm little hearts. He feels their tears coursing down his own cheeks and he clasps them tighter and tighter. A chariot of fire seems to descend from heaven. The children enter it. He follows them and embraces them once again, and yet once more. The chariot is lifted towards heaven; and Michel embraces the children tighter. How sweet it all is!

"A saintly one before you goes," Fage Gruneh hears the school boys lugubriously chanting. She looks through her little window and sees them carrying Zise with great honor. She hurries over to Michel to tell him to come into the house and warm himself while the Chevrah Kadishah do their work.

Her mournful cries resound through the cemetery. She finds Michel lying in the grave, cold—dead. Close to his heart he embraces his shovel and pick. And on his peaceful face rests a calm and happy smile.

## IVAN SMIRNOFF

## A Leaf from Old Russian-Jewish Life

IVAN SMIRNOFF was his name. The very name suggests powerful shoulders, broad chest, piercing eyes—a veritable Hercules. These were not his features. Underneath his torn and tattered garments, that hardly covered his whole body, were shoulders bent with a heavy burden; his heavy brows well-nigh hid his melancholy eyes, which were filled with an ocean of tears.

He came to our little town, Bednofki, a man well advanced in years; whence, no one knew. Often he was mistaken for an ordinary beggar; there were so many in Lithuania.

Our synagogue was situated in what was known as the Synagogue Square.

On Friday nights when the synagogue lamps were lit and the Sabbath lights were kindled, the synagogue quarter of our city presented a brilliant appearance. We who loved our city with the enthusiasm of youth, thought that it rivaled the queen of the night in grandeur, and in splendor, the starry lamps of the sky. And indeed, who can forget the sweet tender tones of the Sabbath melody, "Come, My Beloved One," as they penetrated beyond the wall of the synagogue and were carried by the evening's breeze to the mountains beyond, and there echoed so that the sacred sounds touched our very hearts.

During the services there was hardly a living soul outside the synagogue. Then when all were absorbed with the one thought, how best to receive the beautiful bride "Sabbath," you could see the broken and bent figure of Ivan stealthily approach the synagogue and eagerly peep through the window in search of something long lost.



The higher the notes sounded within, the more gloomy and crestfallen the man without became. . . .

The service over, the synagogue resounded with the ordinary *Gut Shabbas* greeting. In the midst of the multitude that streamed from the various houses of worship, stood Ivan, sadly, earnestly gazing at every Jewish face. All that noticed him passed him by with the words, "A peaceful, good-natured gentile."

Moshe Itzell, the gravedigger, saw him often pass into their Jewish cemetery, and there stand for hours with an aimless look on his face and gaze and gaze.

"What are you doing here, Ivan?" he once asked.

"O, nothing. I just want to rest here for a moment."

\* \* \*

It was Passover eve. My younger brother, for that evening Prince Number Two, since our father was styled king and our mother queen, was just in the midst of that perplexing question, the why and wherefore of the matzah, and we were all deeply interested in his ingenious way of stating the old, old query as though it were something new, when the door was slowly and deliberately opened and Ivan Smirnoff entered the room and stood near the door.

On an ordinary day he would get a piece of bread and walk out with a quiet "Thank you." This evening it was different. Our father was king, and, with princely liberality he invited him to take a seat, while mother brought him some Passover wine and a Passover cake.

"No, thank you," said he in a weak, trembling voice. "I thank you exceedingly; I am not hungry for food—I—I just want to hear you praise God. I thank you."

At a nod from father, we started to read the Passover service. Carefully we counted all the plagues of Egypt,



and each plague, symbolically represented by a drop of wine removed from the cup, made us rather angry that there were so many of them. Ivan, immensely interested, watched us closely and occasionally heaved a sigh.

"Praise ye the Lord!" called out our father, in a tone of triumph, as he chanted the psalms of the Passover service, and we were ready to follow suit, when we were startled by an unearthly voice that seemed to come from our midst.

Frightened, we looked around, and behold, Ivan was weeping bitterly.

We remained silent as though turned to stone. His bitter tears pierced our hearts. At last father arose, and leaving his evening's throne, came to him and asked, "Why do you weep, Ivan?"

His tears flowed faster.

"Are you not well: do you want anything?" He lifted his eyes to my father and in a choking voice said, "Oh, I want much! I want all. They robbed me—my—name—my parents, my friends—my—name—I am a Jew!"

Uttering these last words he fell and fainted.

One long month Ivan lay on a sick bed in our house, struggling for life. During all these days, he often spoke of his checkered life; how, in the time of Nicholas the First, he had been wrenched from his parent's arms while yet a mere boy; how he and thousands of other waifs were carried captive into deep, dark Russia and there forced to the baptismal font; what tortures, what suffering, what misery embittered his life while serving his Czar twenty-five years; how throughout his life the thought haunted him that he was born a Jew, that he would yet die a Jew.

For a time the whole town was ignorant of all, for father told no one; yet the secret leaked out, and the night which was Ivan's last there were ten men and some

women standing at his deathbed, shaking their heads and weeping silently.

"He wants to say something," said Zorach, the *shamash*, to my father, who stood near the window absorbed in thought, apparently looking out at the street.

My father walked over to Ivan. The dying man, stretching out his trembling hand, asked in a weak voice that they raise him in the bed. His haggard face made his black eyes, always hidden by his blacker brows and his hat two sizes too large, gleam like bright stars in the night. He observed each one in the room as brother would brother after a separation of years; as a father would his long lost son. Thus he sat a few minutes, and lay down again.

"This is my happiest day," said he in slow measured tones. "Sixty years I was a stranger . . . forced to pass days with a stepmother. . . . My own mother constantly beckoned to me to come back, my heart was drawn to her with the force of a magnet. . . . Strong, irresistible chains were forged to keep me forever away from her. There near the synagogue the tears that I secretly and silently shed would make rivers of waters. In the little garret of the old synagogue you will find a well worn *tallith* that I would daily wind around my head, eagerly asking the Jewish God that I might at least die among my brethren—among the Jews; and my only request . . . do promise me that I will be buried as a Jew—do promise, in the *tallith*."

A few words of the confessional were hastily said with him, and Ivan passed away peacefully.



In a lifeless world of tombstones stands one with no epitaph. Though many pass it by to read the long list of

virtues possessed by those who have passed into the valley of the shadow of death, there are some that stand at this mute stone, shake their heads, and say, "Still he died a Jew."

### A TALE OF BELOROTKA

RABBI ABRAHAM BOGIN is in his study absorbed in studying a page of the Talmud to settle his disturbed mind.

Yente Genende, the wife of Shlomo the Cobbler, was in to see him a while ago with a slaughtered chicken in which she had found a needle.

She wanted to know if it were kosher or terefah.

Rabbi Abraham, following the liberal view of the House of Hillel, comforted her by ruling that the chicken may be eaten.

Yet, if the identical case had happened to the wife of a rich man, he would have decided that it was terefah.

Nevertheless, somewhat disturbed, he is searching in the Talmud to find out whether the teachers of old corroborate him.

While he is absorbed in this great problem, his wife, Lea, reports that two young men whose fathers are known to the rabbi, are troubled and would like very much to see him.

As the young men are ushered in by the rebbetzin, the rabbi greets them with delight.

He knows that both are Talmud students in the Vilna Yeshivah and that they both are home for the holidays.

The rabbi notices that they are depressed and worried.

The older one, already with a sprinkling of hair on his face like grass in the early spring, is trembling. He pulls the sleeve of the younger one to begin to speak.

Since both hesitate, the rabbi encourages them.



"Well, my children, it seems you are in trouble. Tell me what is the matter."

Hesitantly, the younger one begins.

"Rabbi, both of us have sinned and we come to you for repentance."

"You have sinned?" wonders the rabbi. "Students in a yeshivah. What happened?"

"While coming home for Yom Tov with Yankel the *baal agalah* (wagon driver)—which took a whole night—we had between us a Jewish maid, who is a servant to a rich Jewish family in the big city. She was coming home to visit her parents. Unknown to me, evil thoughts came to my mind and since 'the thought is as bad as the deed,' I am disturbed. My friend confessed to me that he, too, was thinking of things unbecoming for a Talmud student each time his cheek felt her hair."

The rabbi places his right hand on his forehead, closes his eyes for a few moments, and says with a sigh:

"I see that both of you will be pious men and your names will be known throughout Israel. I realize that you are young and that you weren't strong enough to conquer the *yezer ha-ra* (the evil inclination). Nevertheless, you must be punished for your sins, and I am sure that the Father of all will forgive you. For the punishment that I am going to recommend will give you strength for the future. Fill your stocking with peas and circle the synagogue seven times, and I am sure our Father in heaven, blessed be He, Who is merciful and receives those who repent sincerely, will forgive you and inscribe your name in the Book of Life."

Young and old are gathered to watch the two young men circle the synagogue.

One is walking with great difficulty and stumbling, while the other walks erectly and with positive steps.



The secret remains with them and the rabbi. . . .

"I pray," says the older one to the younger, "why is it that I suffer pain with every step and you walk so freely? Don't you have peas in your stockings?"

"Sure I have," exclaims the younger one. "Do you think I would defy our rabbi? I followed his command—except my peas are cooked."

## THE THIEVES

From Jewish Life in Old Russia

THE mill is busily buzzing.

Berel, the miller, runs busily to and fro, not knowing what to do first. The country gentleman's corn is almost ground, and soon it will be time to pour new corn into the bin, but he is at a loss to know whose corn to pour next. Simcha, the flour dealer, has sent word that his corn be ground as soon as possible, and the matter is not to be discussed with him, for if Simcha should by chance be made angry, Berel would lose his job, his standing, and then what could he do—take a sack on his back and begin to beg?

"Oh, if I could only get off my hands first Zlata the widow's corn—" he scratches his head despondently and angrily—"only yesterday she told me that if she needed a piece of bread even for medicine, she could not find it in her house. But what can I do? I am no more than a piece of wood."

"Berel," suddenly calls the owner of the mill, through a small window, "as soon as the measure of corn is ground change the stones and immediately pour in Simcha's. Do you hear?"

"And Zlata's corn?" asks Berel, half-frightened, as he

picks up the broom to sweep the scattered grains to the bin.

"What's that?" yells Daniel, the owner, aroused and angered. "Zlata, schmata, what sort of business is that? Do what you're told to do, and let that be enough. If Zlata needs bread she can buy it, and that's all there's to it. Pretty soon you will dictate to me whom to choose for my daughter. Did you ever hear the like?"

Angered, he runs from the window, but presently returns.

"Berel," he says, "remember that this is Friday evening; I am going to bathe, and when I return I want to find Simcha's corn ground and in a sack ready to load into the wagon."

Daniel goes away and Berel sits down near the bin. The corn to be ground is diminishing, and Berel thinks, "Simcha needs the flour so badly, for what reason? Has he no bread in the house? Are there not enough sacks piled on his shelves from the floor to the ceiling? Would it not be a favor to Zlata to grind her corn first? The poor widow, alone, in poverty, she awaits the flour with as much longing as we do Messiah. But what can I do? For I am only a stick. If I would—"

Brrrrr-thrtrd-tssssss—suddenly the stones start to grind against each other. The corn has all been ground and new corn must be poured in.

Berel rises swiftly. A thought flits across his mind. "I will pour Zlata's corn into the bin next, and what will happen will happen." He takes hold of Zlata's corn, but stops and drops it.

Brrrr-trdtrd-tssssss go the millstones as they rub together.

Like a wild beast in anger, Berel grabs Simcha's sack

of corn and hurls it into the bin with such force that the sack bursts. "Curses upon their hearts!" he storms. "In the synagogue, in the city, everywhere, all over, even in the mill, they are to be favorites. Curses upon them! Why, why need we poor devils live? All week I am as white as a ghost; the dust chokes me night and day; weeks after weeks pass away and I do not see my wife and children. When she sometimes brings me food I don't even get a minute to speak to her. Daniel swallows us with his glance—and what is the end? When sometimes I want to do a poor woman a favor, they will not let me do it. Curses on them. I am only a stick, and rather than such a life—"

"Berel, good morning! What, you are scolding. Hm . . . I would never have believed you could get angry. What is the matter? Something up?"

Sholom, the Talmud Torah teacher, who has just come in to collect the kopek "week dues" for the school, succeeds in allaying Berel's anger, but within him there still rages a tempest.

"I am glad you came at this time," says Berel to Sholom, pointing to a sack of flour for him to sit on, on which is spread a clean sack. "You know, Sholom, that I am an ordinary blunt man, with no education, but you understand that it is not my fault. I was left an orphan at eight and . . ."

"Yes, I understand; what is there to guess about?" breaks in Sholom. "You evidently want some advice, eh?"

"Yes, I want to ask you whether there is any decision in the Holy Scriptures, as to whose corn should be ground first, a rich man's or a poor woman's?"

"Well, yes, somewhere there is something which bears on this," responds Sholom, diffidently; "somewhere there must be a decision on such a matter, and if you come



over to see me Saturday after I have my nap, I will see what I can find concerning this query. Have you got the weekly dues?"

Berel pulls from his bosom a large woolen stocking, in which there are a few kopeks, and with great satisfaction hands them to Sholom.

The Talmud Torah teacher wishes him a "Gut Shabbas," and leaves hurriedly.

After him there enters a tall, thin, haggard woman, her face pale and her eyes deep set. This is Zlata, the widow.

"Good morning to you, Reb Berel! I suppose my corn is being ground. After much pleading I got the loan of Joseph the butcher's cart to haul the flour home. Tell me, Reb Berel, will I have to wait long yet?"

Berel, his head bowed, does not answer.

"Ah, I see, Reb Berel; you also are beginning to carry your head high. You are too proud to answer—"

"I have nothing to answer," sighs the miller. "Your corn has not been touched. Perhaps we will grind it Monday. You know that it is not my fault, for I am only a stick of wood."

"But I haven't a crumb of bread in my house," says Zlata, sorrowfully.

"The satisfied do not believe the hungry," mourns Berel, with a shake of his head.

"But what can I do?"

"You will not be able to bake anyway now; it is pretty nearly Sabbath," adds Berel, comforting her.

"Well, you are almost right, my friend, but I could at least bake a couple of 'platzkers.'"

"Zlata, I have a plan," whispers Berel. "But you must not say a word to anybody. You see, where there is Torah there is common sense. Where there is a will there is a way."



"Who knows what it is," mutters Zlata.

"I will take a few handfuls of flour from the sack near the wheel, and when your corn is ground I will pay it back; that will be borrowing the flour."

"Well, let it be thus," says Zlata, thankfully. "Can I help myself?"

Zlata holds her sack as Berel pours in the flour from the other sack.

"Berel! Berel! hey there! Where are you?" Suddenly Daniel's voice is heard.

The miller and the poor widow are stiffened with fear.

"A miracle that the bath-house was unusable," yells Daniel, "and when I come back I see that strange hands are good only to handle fire. You can't trust them. Berel, where . . .

"What is this?" he screams, as he sees them both near the sack of flour. "To handle fire—why, they can also steal flour. Thieves, thieves!"

Like an angry wolf, he throws himself upon them. They stand breathless, unable to utter a word.

"Get out of here, you thieves; get out!" he cries.

Zlata takes courage and begins, "Reb Daniel—"

"Be quiet, you; not a word. You are fortunate that this is Friday evening, erev Shabbas, else I would soon put you in other hands," thunders Daniel. "Get out of the mill, Berel! You shall never again set foot in here. Get out! Thieves, thieves! Get out!"



The mud is deep and slimy. Zlata pulls the cart up hill with head bowed to the ground, while Berel pushes from behind.

Both are sighing, despairingly.















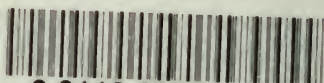
published in a local Jewish weekly, is the entire process of Americanization, with characteristic humor even in the episodes that come close to tragedy. For this is the life of all Jews; like Sholom Aleichem and his compeers, Mr. Komaiko has demonstrated the kinship of comedy and tragedy in every aspect of past Jewish life. The stories need not, however, be read for their racial or religious implications; they are in the highest degree entertaining on their own account.





## S. B. KOMAIKO

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA  
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HERE TO STAY NEW YORK



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was born  
ber 15,  
a (Zeles-  
States in  
in Vilno  
On the  
way to this country he spent a few  
months in London, England, where he  
tried his pen for the Yiddish "Jewish  
Express" which appeared in Leeds.

Arriving here, he went through all the  
hardships of immigrants in those days  
until he joined the staff of the "Jewish  
Daily Herald." Upon the recommenda-  
tion of Professor Richard Gottheil, Mr.  
Komaiko became the American corre-  
spondent to "Die Welt" which appeared  
in Vienna, as the official organ of the  
Zionist movement. He was secretary of  
N. Y. Ohavei Zion.

In 1903 Mr. Komaiko settled in Chicago, contributing a number of years to  
the local "Jewish Daily Courier," and simultaneously to the various Jewish papers  
in New York. Here he became very active in many philanthropic institutions and  
in the Zionist movement. In 1907 he was elected to Kadimah Zionist organization.

In 1910 he organized an insurance agency and at the same time he com-  
piled his book of short stories *Yiddishe Welten* which was well received by the  
Yiddish reading public.

When the first World War broke out, he served as a member of an exemp-  
tion board, and later became Director of Publicity of the United States Food  
Administration for Illinois, and was cited by Herbert Hoover for his patriotic  
work.

After the war he was quite active in securing the recognition of the United  
States for the Republic of Lithuania. He visited Lithuania in 1923 and was  
received by President Stulginskis from whom he asked affirmation of Jewish  
rights. The same government decorated Mr. Komaiko with the Chevalier of the  
Cross of Grand Duke Gediminas in 1935.

From Lithuania Mr. Komaiko attended the 13th Zionist Congress which was  
held in Carlsbad, Czechoslovakia. In 1935 Mr. Komaiko was appointed by  
Mayor Edward Kelly on the Chicago Plan Commission.

In the second World War he was very active in USO work through the  
Jewish Welfare Board, and was also Deputy of the Red Cross Blood Donor  
Service. These two activities he held during the entire war. Over the years Mr.  
Komaiko contributed to the "Jewish Daily News of New York," the "Jewish  
Morning Journal," the "Chicago Sentinel," the "Jewish Record" of St. Louis,  
and many other publications.